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Elegant Epistles



London: Printed for J. Mauleman, and the other Proprietors 1822.



March 26th 1845
ELEGANT EPISTLES:

BEING

A COPIOUS COLLECTION

OF

FAMILIAR AND AMUSING LETTERS,

SELECTED FOR THE

IMPROVEMENT OF YOUNG PERSONS,

AND FOR

GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT,

FROM

CICERO,
PLINY,
SYDNEY,
BACON,
RALEIGH,
HOWEL,
RUSSELL,
CLARENDON,
TEMPLE,
LOCKE,
SHAFTESBURY,

POPE,
SWIFT,
ADDISON,
STEELE,
ARBUTHNOT,
GAY,
ATTERBURY,
TILLOTSON,
SHENSTONE,
SOMERSET,
GRAY,

LUXBOROUGH,
WEST,
STERNE,
CHATHAM,
JOHNSON,
LYTTLETON,
CHESTERFIELD,
GIBBON,
COWPER,
BEATTIE,
JONES,

RICHARDSON,
YOUNG,
LADY M. W. MONTAGUE,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU,
SEWARD,
WARBURTON,
HURD,
FOX,
WALPOLE,
FRANKLIN,
AND OTHERS.

Absentes adsunt.—Cic.

A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED AND IMPROVED.

LONDON:

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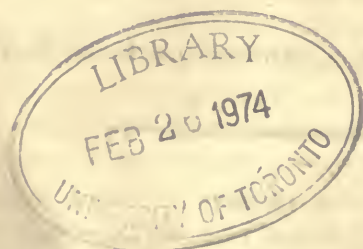
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P R E F A C E.

THE following Collection of Letters is a part of a design, which the Editor had formed, to select and publish, in large volumes, such compositions, both in verse and prose, as he judged might be useful to young persons, by conducing to their improvement in their own language, while they were cultivating an acquaintance with the ancients, and pursuing all other accomplishments of a liberal education.

The first two parts of his plan, *Elegant Extracts in Prose and Poetry*, already published, and repeatedly printed, have been received with a degree of favour, which evinces that the preconceived idea of their utility has been amply confirmed by the decisions of experience.

Animated by their good reception, the Editor determined to proceed in his design, and to add, in a similar volume, a copious Collection of LETTERS. It occurred to him, that no literary exercise is in such constant request as Letter-writing. All are not to be Poets, Orators, or Historians; but all, at least above the lowest rank, are to be sometimes Letter-writers. The daily intercourse of common life cannot be duly preserved without this mode of communication. That much pleasure, and much advantage, of various kinds, is derived from it, is obvious and incontestable. Every emergence furnishes occasion for it. It is necessary to friendship, and to love; to interest, and to ambition. In every pursuit, and in every department of polished life, to write Letters is an indispensable requisite; and to write them well, a powerful recommendation. By epistolary correspondence the most important business, commercial, political, and private, is usually transacted. Who is there, who at some period of his life, finds it not of consequence to him to draw up an address with propriety, to narrate an event, to describe a character faithfully, or to write letters of compliment, condolence, or congratulation? Many natives of this country spend their youth in foreign climes. How greatly does it contribute to raise their characters at home, when they are able to write correct and judicious letters to their relations, their friends, their patrons, and their employers? A clear, a discreet, and an elegant letter, establishes their character in their native country, while perhaps their persons are at the distance of the antipodes, raises esteem among all who read it, and often lays a foundation for future eminence. It goes before them, like a pioneer, and smooths the road, and levels the hill that leads up to honour and to fortune.

Add to these considerations, that, as an easy exercise to improve the style, and prepare for that composition, which several of the professions require, no-

thing is more advantageous than the practice of Letter-writing at an early age.

In every view of the subject, Letter-writing appeared to the Editor so useful and important, that he thought he could not render a more acceptable service to young students than to present them with a great variety of epistolary MODELS, comprised, for their more convenient use, in one capacious volume. Models in art are certainly more instructive than rules; as examples in life are more efficacious than precepts. Rules, indeed, for Letter-writing, of which there is a great abundance, appear to be little more than the idle effusions of pedantry; the superfluous inventions of ingenuity misemployed. The Letters, which the writers of rules have given as examples for imitation, are often nothing more than mere *centos* in the expression, and servile copies in the sentiments. They have nothing in them of the healthy hue and lively vigour of nature. They resemble puny plants raised in a clime ungenial, by the gardener's incessant labour, yet possessing, after all, neither beauty, flavour, nor *stamina* for duration.

The few rules necessary in the ART, as it is called, of Letter-writing, are such as will always be prescribed to itself by a competent share of *common sense*, duly informed by a common education. A regard must always be shewn to time, place, and person. He, who has good sense, will of course observe these things; and he who has it not will not learn to observe them by the rules of rhetoricians. But to assist invention and to promote order, it may be sometimes expedient to make, in the mind, a division of a Letter into three parts, the Aristotelian *beginning, middle, and end*: or, in other words, into the exordium or introduction, the statement, proposition, or narrative, and the conclusion.

The exordium or introduction should be employed, not indeed with the formality of rhetoric, but with the ease of natural politeness and benevolence, in conciliating esteem, favour, and attention; the proposition or narrative, in stating the business with clearness and precision; the conclusion, in confirming what has been premised, in making apologies, in extenuating offence, and in cordial expressions of respect and affection: but is there any thing in these precepts not already obvious to common sense?

As to the epistolary style, of which so much has been said, those who wish to confine it to the easy and familiar have formed too narrow ideas of epistolary composition. The Epistle admits every subject: and every subject has its appropriate style. Ease is not to be confounded with negligence. In the most familiar Letter on the commonest subject an Attic neatness is required. Ease in writing, like ease in dress, notwithstanding all its charms, is but too apt to degenerate to the carelessness of the sloven. In the daily attire of a gentleman, gold lace may not be requisite; but rags or filth are not to be borne. In the face, paint is not to be approved; but cleanliness cannot be neglected, without occasioning still greater disgust than rouge and ceruse.

That epistolary style is clearly the best, whether easy or elaborate, simple or

adorned, which is best adapted to the subject, to time, to place, and to person; which upon grave and momentous topics is solemn and dignified; on common themes, terse, easy, and only not careless; on little and trifling matters, gay, airy, lively, and facetious; on jocular subjects, sparkling and humorous; in formal and complimentary addresses, embellished with rhetorical figures, and finished with polished periods; in persuasion, bland, insinuating, and ardent; in exhortation, serious and sententious; on prosperous affairs, open and joyous; on adverse, pensive and tender. A different style is often necessary on the same topics, to old people and to young; to men and to women; to rich and to poor; to the great and to the little; to scholars and to the illiterate; to strangers and to familiar companions. And thus indeed might one proceed to great extent, with all the parade of precept; but though this, and much more that might be repeated, may be certainly true, yet it is all sufficiently obvious to that COMMON SENSE, whose claims ought at all times to be asserted against the encroachments of pedantic tyranny*.

A good understanding, as it has been already observed, improved by reading the best writers, by accurate observation of men and manners, and, above all, by use and practice, will be sufficient to form an accomplished Letter-writer, without restraining the vigour of his genius, and the flights of his fancy, by a rigid observance of the line and rule. The best Letters, and indeed the best compositions of every kind, were produced before the boasted rules to teach how to write them were written or invented. The rules prescribed by critics for writing Letters are so minute and particular as to remind one of the *recipies* in Hannah Glasse's Cookery. They pretend to teach how to express thoughts on paper with a mechanical process, similar to that in which the culinary authoress instructs her disciples in the composition of a minced-pie.

It is indeed a remark confirmed by long experience, that merchants, men of business, and particularly the ladies, who have never read, or even heard of the rules of an *Erasmus*, a *Vives*, a *Melchior Junius*, or a *Lipsius*, write Letters with admirable ease, perspicuity, propriety, and elegance; far better,

* The writers on the Epistolary Art divide Epistles into various kinds:

EPISTOLÆ SUNT,

Commendatitiæ—Communicatoriæ—Cohortatoriæ,—quæ pertinent Suasoriæ, Dissuasoriæ—Petitoriæ—Consolatoriæ—Officiosæ—Conciliatoriæ—Mandatoriæ—Gratulatoriæ—Laudatoriæ—Reprehensoriæ—Gratiarum actiones—Nuncupatoriæ seu Dedicatoriæ—Accusatoriæ seu Expositulatoriæ—Querulæ et Indignatoriæ—Comminatoriæ—Nunciatoriæ—Denunciatoriæ—Jocosæ.

But these distinctions display more of ostentation than they furnish of utility. Every man of sense must know the tendency of his Letter, from which it takes its technical name, though he may not have heard the rhetorician's appellation of it. To persons, however, who read with a critical eye, it may not be unpleasant to class letters under some of the titles in the above table, which it would be easy to enlarge.

I refer the reader, who is curious to learn what critics have written on the art of writing letters, to Erasmus's very ingenious treatise, "*De conscribendis Epistolis*," where he will find much to entertain him. The genius of Erasmus diffuses a sunshine over the dreary fields of didactic information.

in every respect, than some of the most celebrated dictators of rules to teach that epistolary correspondence, which themselves could never successfully practise. The learned Manutius, who had studied every rule, used to employ a month in writing a Letter of moderate length, which many an English lady could surpass in an hour.

It may not be improper in this place to mention, for the honour of the ladies, that, according to learned authors, the very first Letter ever written was written by a lady. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Tatian* also, who copies from *Hellanicus* the historian*, expressly affirm, that the first epistle ever composed was the production of *Atossa*, a Persian empress. The learned *Dodwell*, as well as others, controverts the fact; and many suppose, that the Letter which *Homer's* *Prætus* gave to *Bellerophon*, as well as that which *David* sent to accomplish the death of *Uriah*, preceded the Letter of *Atossa*. Without entering into a chronological discussion, one may assert the probability, that a lady was the first writer of Letters; as ladies have, in modern times, displayed peculiar grace and spirit in epistolary correspondence. *Dodwell's* opinion required not the learning of *Dodwell* to support it, when he supposes that epistles were written, in some form or other, as soon as the art of marking thoughts by written signs was discovered and divulged.

But instead of dwelling any longer on topics, either obvious of themselves, or rather curious than useful, it is more expedient to inform the Reader what he is to expect in the subsequent volume.

The First Book in the Collection is formed from the Letters of *Cicero* and *Pliny*. To attempt to raise their characters by praises at this period, after the world has agreed in the admiration of them near two thousand years, would be no less superfluous than to pronounce an eulogium on the sun, or to describe the beauties of the rainbow. From them a few of their most entertaining Letters, and such as have a reference to familiar life, have been principally selected; and there is little doubt, but that an attentive student, not deficient in ability, may catch, from the perusal of what is here inserted, much of their politeness, both of sentiment and expression. If he possesses taste, he must be entertained by them. It is but justice to add, that great praise is due to the translator, whose polished understanding seems to have assimilated the grace of his celebrated originals.

The next Book consists of Letters from many great and distinguished persons of our own nation, written at an early period of English literature.

The correspondence of the *Sydney* family forms one part of it. To the generality of readers this will be new and curious, as it was never published but in expensive folios. The *Sydney* family appear to have been, in their time, the most enlightened, polished, and virtuous, which the nation could boast. Many of their Letters are written in a strong, a nervous, and, in many respects, an excellent style for the age; and all that are here selected may be considered

* Επιστολας συντασσειν εξεβη η Περσων ποτε ηγησαμενη γυνη, καθαπερ φησιν Ἑλληνικος, Ἀτσοσα ὅτι ονομα αὐτῇ ἦν. *TATIAN. Orat. contra Græcos.*

as curiosities, furnishing matter for speculation on the language and customs of persons in high rank, at the period in which they were composed. It is a recommendation of them, that they are genuine Family Letters, not studiously laboured, like those of professed Wits and Letter-writers, but written in perfect confidence, and without the least idea of their future publication. But as old language is certainly not a model for young students in the present day, it must be remembered, that this compilation professes, in its title page, to be designed for GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT, as well as for the perusal and improvement of those who are in the course of their education.

The Letters of the celebrated Howel*, which form another considerable portion of the Second Book, cannot fail of affording, in addition to the instruction of the student, much amusement to the more advanced reader, who inspects the volume merely to pass away his vacant hours. Howel's Letters were, at one time, extremely popular. They have passed through many editions. Their wit, vivacity, and frankness, render them more pleasing than many more modern and more exact compositions. Several celebrated Collections of Letters, more correct and finished, have in them less wit, less fire, less spirit, fewer ideas, and scantier information.

Lady Rachel Russell's Letters are inserted in the Second Book, and must be allowed to constitute a very useful and ornamental part of it. They have been much admired by persons of taste and sensibility, both for their thoughts and their diction. Piety and conjugal affection, expressed in language, considering the time of its composition, so pure and proper, cannot but afford a fine example to the female aspirants after delicacy, virtue, taste, and whatever is excellent and laudable in the wife, the widow, and the mother. Such patterns in high life cannot fail of becoming beneficial in proportion as they are more known and better observed.

The very names indeed of those, whose Letters furnish this and the remaining Books, are of themselves a sufficient recommendation of them. To dwell on the character and excellencies of each would be to abuse the Reader's patience. Most of them are of that exalted and established rank, which praise cannot now elevate, nor censure degrade. It is proper to remark, that a very considerable number of Letters recently published have now been added

* The following is the opinion of Morhof, a learned critic, concerning the Letters of Howel, which were first published in 1645:—

“Non debent hic quoque omitti JACOBI HOWEL, Equitis Angli, et Secretarii Regii, *Epistolæ familiares*. . . Mixta hic sunt negotiis civilibus literaria, *magnaue illa rarissimarum rerum varietas mirificè legentem delectat*. Agitur hic de rebus Anglicis, Gallicis, Italicis, Germanicis, Hispanicis, Belgicis, Danicis, Suecicis, undè multa ad historiam eorum temporum observari possunt. Inspurguntur nonnunquam poetici sales et facetiæ. Physica et medica non omituntur. De rebus literariis disquiruntur. Historiæ rariores narrantur. Characteres et lineamenta virorum illustrium et doctorum, tam in Angliâ, quàm in aliis locis, ab illo proponuntur. Elucet denique ex stylo varia et elegans eruditio. . . Infinita propemodum hic occurrunt observatione dignissima. Quare operæ pretium faceret, qui has Epistolas in linguam vel Latinam vel Germanicam converteret.—POLYHIST. LIT., lib. ii, cap. 24.

from authors of great celebrity; and to keep the volume within a convenient size, many have been omitted of less interest, that appeared in the last edition.

Since, then, the writers of these Letters are able to speak so powerfully for themselves, why should the Reader be detained by a longer Preface from better entertainment? Things intrinsically good will be duly appreciated by a discerning Public, and require not the ostentatious display of a florid encomium. If the Letters here selected were the Letters of obscure men and women, a recommendatory introduction might be necessary to their ready admission; but they are the Letters of persons high in rank, high in fame, high in every quality which can excite and reward the attention of a nation, of which most of them have been at once the ornaments and the luminaries. Here indeed, like the setting sun, they shine with a softer radiance than in their more studied works; retaining, however, their beauty and magnitude undiminished, though their meridian fervour is abated. Associated in this Compilation, they unite their orbs, and form a galaxy: they charm with a mild, diffusive light; though they may not dazzle, as in their greater works, with a noon-day splendour.

But it is time to conclude, since to proceed in recommending those, who recommend themselves, is but an officious ceremony: yet the Editor, before he withdraws himself, begs leave to ask the Reader one question: Would he not think it a pleasure and a happiness, beyond the power of adequate estimation, to be able to sit down, whenever he pleases, and enjoy, at his fire-side, the conversation of Cicero and Pliny, of the noble Sydneys, of the lively Howel, of Pope, of Johnson, of Franklin, of Fox, of Cowper, and of all the other illustrious and excellent persons, whose familiar and unstudied Letters fill the volume before him? That pleasure, and that happiness, however great, he may here actually obtain, in as great perfection as is now possible, since death has silenced their eloquent tongues. By a very slight effort of imagination he may suppose himself, while he revolves these pages, in the midst of the intelligent, cheerful, social circle; and when satisfied with the familiar conversation of one, turn to another, equally excellent and entertaining in his way, though on a different subject, and in a diversified style. Happy intercourse, exempt from care, from strife, from envy! and happy they, who have leisure, sense, and taste, to relish it!

That a satisfaction so pure and so exalted may be enjoyed from this attempt, is the sincere wish of the Editor; who ventures to express a hope, that if much is done for the Reader's entertainment, he will not complain that more has not been accomplished, but view excellence with due approbation, and defect with good-natured indulgence.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

ANCIENT LETTERS.

SECTION I.

*From the Letters of MARCUS TULLIUS
CICERO, to several of his Friends, as
translated by William Melmoth, Esq.*

Letter	Page
1 To Terentia, to my dearest Tullia, and to my Son.....	1
2 From the same to the same.....	2
3 From the same to the same.....	3
4 To Terentia	5
5 To Marcus Marius	6
6 To Marcus Licinius Crassus	8
7 To Julius Cæsar.....	9
8 To Trebatius	10
9 To the same	ibid.
10 To the same	11
11 To the same	ibid.
12 To the same	12
13 To the same	ibid.
14 To Quintus Philippus, Proconsul	13
15 To Lucius Valerius, the Lawyer.....	14
16 To Trebatius	ibid.
17 To Caius Curio	15
18 To Trebatius	ibid.
19 To Caius Curio	ibid.
20 To Trebatius	16
21 To Caius Curio	17
22 To Trebatius	ibid.
23 To Titus Fadius.....	18
24 To Marcus Cælius	ibid.
25 To Terentia and Tullia.....	19
26 To Tiro	ibid.
27 To the same	20
28 To Terentia and to Tullia	21
29 To the same	ibid.
30 To Terentia	22
31 To the same	ibid.
32 To the same	23
33 To the same	ibid.
34 To the same	ibid.
35 To the same	ibid.
36 To the same	ibid.
37 To the same	ibid.
38 To Titius	24
39 To Terentia	25
40 To the same	ibid.

Letter	Page
41 To Terentia	25
42 To the same	ibid.
43 To the same	26
44 To Lucius Papirius Pætus	ibid.
45 To Lucius Mescinius	ibid.
46 To Varro.....	27
47 To Papirius Pætus	28
48 To the same	30
49 To Gallus	31
50 To Cæsar.....	32
51 To Dolabella	ibid.
52 Servius Sulpicius to Cicero	33
53 To Servius Sulpicius.....	34
54 To Lucius Lucceius	36
55 Lucceius to Cicero	ibid.
56 To Lucius Lucceius	37
57 To Tiro	38
58 To the same	ibid.

SECTION II,

*From the Letters of PLINY the Consul, to
several of his Friends, as translated by
William Melmoth, Esq.*

1 To Caninius Rufus.....	39
2 To Pompeia Celerina	40
3 To Cornelius Tacitus.....	ibid.
4 To Minutius Fundanus.....	ibid.
5 To Atrius Clemens.....	41
6 To Calectrius Tito	42
7 To Junius Mauricus	43
8 To Septitius Clarus	44
9 To Erucius.....	ibid.
10 To Cornelius Tacitus.....	45
11 To Catilius Severus	47
12 To Bebius	49
13 To Voconius Romanus	ibid.
14 To Paulinus	50
15 To Nepos	51
16 To Caninius	52
17 To Octavius	ibid.
18 To Priscus	ibid.
19 To Valerianus	53
20 To Mauricus	54

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
21 To Cerealis.....	54	46 To Capito	68
22 To Calvisius	55	47 To Saturninus.....	69
23 To Hispulla	56	48 To Marcellinus	ibid.
24 To Tranquillus	ibid.	49 To Spurinna	70
25 To Catilius	57	50 To Servianus	71
26 To Procnlus	ibid.	51 To Quintilian	ibid.
27 To Nepos.....	ibid.	52 To Restitutus	ibid.
28 To Servianus	59	53 To Præsens.....	72
29 To Maximus	ibid.	54 To Calpurnia	ibid.
30 To Fabatus.....	60	55 To Tuscus	ibid.
31 To Clemens.....	ibid.	56 To Priscus	74
32 To Antoninus.....	61	57 To Rufus	75
33 To Naso	ibid.	58 To Maximus	ibid.
34 To Lepidus.....	62	59 To Genitor	76
35 To Cornelius Tacitus.....	ibid.	60 To Geminius	ibid.
36 To Valerius Paulinus	63	61 To Romanus	ibid.
37 To Gallus	64	62 To Ursus.....	77
38 To Hispulla.....	ibid.	63 To Fabatus	ibid.
39 To Maximus	65	64 To Hispulla	78
40 To Velius Cerealis.....	ibid.	65 To Minutianus	ibid.
41 To Valens	66	66 To Sabinianus	79
42 To Maximus	ibid.	67 To the same	ibid.
43 To Nepos.....	ibid.	68 To Fuscus	ibid.
44 To Licinius.....	67	69 To the same	80
45 To Maximus	ibid.		

BOOK II.

MODERN LETTERS; OF EARLY DATE.

SECTION I.

Modern, and of early Date.

1 QUEEN Anne Bullen to King Henry...	81	15 Sir Philip Sidney to his father, Sir Henry Sidney.....	94
2 A Letter from Lady More to Mr. Secretary Cromwell	82	16 Sir Phili Sidney to Edward Waterhouse, Esq. Secretary of Ireland	ibid.
3 Lady Stafford to Mr. Secretary Cromwell.....	ibid.	17 Sir Philip Sidney to Edward Molineux, Esq. Secretary to his father, as Lord Deputy.....	95
4 Earl of Essex to Queen Elizabeth ...	83	18 Edward Molineux, Esq. to Philip Sidney, in answer to the abovesaid letter	ibid.
5 Lord Chancellor Egerton to the Earl of Essex	ibid.	19 Sir Henry Sidney to his son, Sir Philip Sidney	ibid.
6 The Earl's answer ..	85	20 Lady Mary Sidney to Edmund Molineux, Esq.	ibid.
7 Sir Henry Sidney to his son Philip Sidney, at school at Shrewsbury, an. 1566, 9 Eliz. then being of the age of twelve years	86	21 Sir Henry Sidney to his son, Robert Sidney, afterwards Earl of Leicester	96
8 Sir Henry Sidney to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.....	87	22 Thomas, Lord Buckhurst, to Robert Dudley; Earl of Leicester, on the death of Sir Philip Sidney	ibid.
9 The Right Honourable Thomas Sackvil, Lord Buckhurst, to Sir Henry Sidney.....	88	23 Robert, Earl of Leicester, to his daughter Dorothy, Countess of Sunderland, on the death of the Earl her husband, who lost his life valiantly fighting for King Charles the First, at the battle of Newberry, 20th Sept. 1643	97
10 Sir Henry Sidney to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.....	ibid.	24 Robert, Earl of Liecester, to the Queen, at Oxford, desiring to know why he was dismissed from the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland ..	98
11 Sir Henry Sidney to Queen Elizabeth ..	90	25 Algernon Sidney to his father, Robert Earl of Leicester	99
12 Sir Henry Sidney to Mr. Secretary Walsingham, concerning the reports of the Earl of Essex's death ..	ibid.		
13 Sir Henry Sidney to the Lords of the Council	92		
14 Sir Henry Sidney to his son, Robert Sidney, afterwards Earl of Leicester ..	ibid.		

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
26 Dr. Sharp to the Duke of Buckingham; with Queen Elizabeth's speech to her army at Tilbury Fort.....	99	14 From James Howel, Esq. to his brother, Mr. Hugh Penry, upon his marriage.....	128
27 Lord Bacon to James I.....	100	15 From the same to Dr. Thos. Prichard at Worcester House	ibid.
28 Sir Walter Raleigh to James I.	101	16 From the same to the Hon. Mr. John Savage (now Earl of Rivers) at Florence	129
29 Sir Walter Raleigh to Sir Robert Carr	ibid.	17 From the same to Dr. Prichard	ibid.
30 Sir Walter Raleigh to Prince Henry, son of James I.	102	18 From the same to his well-beloved cousin, Mr. T. V.....	130
31 Lord Bacon to James I. after his dis- grace	103	19 From the same to the Lady Jane Sa- vage, Marchioness of Winchester	131
32 Lord Baltimore, to Lord Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford.....	105	20 From the same to Mr. R. Sc. at York	ibid.
33 Lord Wentworth to Archbishop Laud	ibid.	21 From the same to the Right Hon. Lady Seroop, Countess of Sunder- land, from Stamford	ibid.
34 Charles I. to Lord Wentworth.....	106	22 From the same to his cousin, Mr. St. John, at Christ Church College in Oxford.....	132
35 Charles I. to the Earl of Strafford ...	ibid.	23 From the same to Sir J. S. Knight ...	133
36 Earl of Strafford to his son	ibid.	24 From the same to R. S. Esq.....	ibid.
37 James, Earl of Derby, to Commissary General Ireton, in answer to the summons sent the Earl to deliver up the Isle of Man.....	107	25 From the same to his father.....	134
38 Charles II. to the Duke of York	108	26 From the same to the Right Rev. Dr. Field, Lord Bishop of St. David's...	ibid.
39 Oliver Cromwell to his son, H. Crom- well	ibid.	27 From the same to Sir Ed. B. Knight	135
40 Lady Mary Cromwell to H. Cromwell	ibid.	28 From the same to Master Tho. Adams	136
41 Henry Cromwell to Lord Paulconberg	109	29 From the same to his nephew, J. P. at St. John's in Oxford	137
42 Lord Broghill to Secretary Thurloe	110	30 From the same to the Right Honour- able the Lady Elizabeth Digby ...	ibid.
43 Henry Cromwell to Richard Crom- well, Protector.	ibid.	31 From the same to Mr. Thomas H. ...	138
44 The Hon. Algernon Sidney to his friend	111	32 From the same to Dr. D. Featley. ...	ibid.
45 Mr. Boyle to the Countess of Ranelagh	112	33 From the same to his honoured friend, Sir S. C.	ibid.
46 From the same to the same	113	34 From the same to Mr. R. Howard ...	140
47 From the same to the same	114	35 From the same to Sir K. D. at Rome	ibid.
48 Mr. Boyle to Lord Broghill	115	36 From the same to Mr. En. P. at Paris	141
49 Mr. Boyle to Dame Augustine Cary	116	37 From the same to Mr. William Blois	142

SECTION II.

Miscellaneous, of early Date, continued.

1 From James Howel, Esq. to Sir J. S. at Leed's Castle.....	118	40 From the same to the Right Honour- able the Lady E. D.	144
2 From the same to his father, upon his first going beyond sea	119	41 From the same to the Lord Marquis of Hartford	ibid.
3 From the same to Dr. Francis Man- sell, since Principal of Jesus Col- lege in Oxford.....	ibid.	42 From the same to J. Sutton, Esq.....	146
4 From the same to Dan. Caldwell, Esq. from Amsterdam	120	43 From the same to the Lord Marquis of Dorchester	147
5 From the same to Mr. Richard Al- tham, at his chambers in Gray's Inn	ibid.	44 From the same to Sir E. S.	149
6 From the same to Captain Francis Bacon, from Paris.....	121	45 From the same to R. Davies, Esq. ...	ibid.
7 From the same to Richard Altham, Esq. from Paris	122	46 From the same to Mr. W. Price, at Oxon	150
8 From the same to Sir James Crofts, from Paris	123	47 From the same to Mr. R. Lee, in Ant- werp	ibid.
9 From the same to Mr. Thomas Por- ter, after Captain Porter, from Barcelona	125	48 From the same to Mr. T. C. at his house upon Tower Hill.....	151
10 From the same to Robert Brown, Esq. at the Middle Temple, from Venice	ibid.	49 Lady Russell's Letter to the King Charles II.	152
11 From the same to Christopher Jones, Esq. at Gray's Inn, from Naples	126	50 From the same to Dr. Fitzwilliam ...	ibid.
12 From the same to Sir Eubule Thewall, Knight, and Principal of Jesus Col- lege in Oxford	127	51 From the same to the same.....	153
13 From the same to Dan. Caldwell, Esq. from the Lord Savage's house in Long Melford.....	ibid.	52 From the same to the same.....	154
		53 Dr. Tillotson to Lady Russell	155
		54 Lady Russell to Dr. Fitzwilliam	ibid.
		55 From the same to the same.....	156
		56 Dean Tillotson to Lady Russell	157
		57 Lady Russell to the Dean of St. Paul's	159
		58 Dean Tillotson to Lady Russell	160
		59 Lady Russell to Lady Sunderland ...	161
		60 The same to Dr. Fitzwilliam.....	162
		61 Dean Tillotson to Lady Russell	163
		62 Lady Russell to the Dean of St. Paul's	ibid.

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
63 Lady Russell to ——— (supposed the Bishop of Salisbury).....	164	78 From Lord Shaftesbury to ——— ...	173
64 The same to Lord Cavendish	165	79 From the same to the same.....	174
65 Archbishop Tillotson to Lady Russell	ibid.	80 From the same to the same.....	175
66 Lady Russell to ——— (supposed Archbishop Tillotson)	166	81 From the same to the same.....	179
67 From the same to Lady ——— (supposed Arlington)	167	82 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
68 From the same to ———.....	ibid.	83 From the same to the same.....	180
69 From the same to Dr. Fitzwilliam ...	ibid.	84 From the same to the same.....	181
70 From the same to Lady ——— Russell	168	85 From the same to R. Molesworth, Esq.	182
71 Archbishop Tillotson to Lady Russell	ibid.	86 From the same to the same.....	183
72 From the same to the same.....	169	87 From the same to the same.....	184
73 The Bishop of Salisbury to Lady Russell ..	ibid.	88 From the same to the same.....	186
74 Lady Russell to King William	170	89 From the same to the same.....	187
75 From the same to Rouvigny, Earl of Galway	ibid.	90 From the same to the same.....	189
76 From Lord Shaftesbury to ——— ...	171	91 From the same to the same.....	190
77 From the same to the same.....	172	92 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
		93 From the same to the same.....	191
		94 From the same to Lord ***, ...	192
		95 From the same to the Earl of Oxford	196
		96 From the same to Lord Godolphin...	197

BOOK III.

LETTERS OF THE LAST CENTURY, AND OF LATE DATE.

SECTION I.

From Mr. POPE and his Friends.

1 Mr. Pope to Mr. Wycherley	198	34 From the same to H. Cromwell, Esq.	223
2 From the same to the same.....	199	35 From the same to the same.....	224
3 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	36 From the same to the same.....	225
4 From the same to the same.....	200	37 From the same to Sir W. Trumbull	ibid.
5 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	38 From the same to the same.....	226
6 From the same to the same.....	201	39 From the same to the same	227
7 From the same to the same.....	202	40 From the same to the Hon. J. C. Esq.....	ibid.
8 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	41 From the same to the same.....	229
9 From the same to the same.....	203	42 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
10 From the same to the same.....	204	43 From the same to the same.....	231
11 From the same to Mr. Walsh ..	ibid.	44 From the same to General Anthony Hamilton	232
12 From the same to the same.....	205	45 From the same to Mr. Steele	ibid.
13 From the same to H. Cromwell, Esq.	207	46 From the same to the same.....	233
14 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	47 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
15 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	48 Mr. Steele to Mr. Pope.....	234
16 From the same to the same.....	208	49 Mr. Pope to Mr. Steele.....	ibid.
17 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	50 From the same to the same.....	235
18 From the same to the same.....	210	51 Mr. Steele to Mr. Pope.....	ibid.
19 From the same to the same.....	211	52 Mr. Pope to Mr. Steele.....	ibid.
20 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	53 From the same to Mr. Addison	ibid.
21 From the same to the same.....	213	54 Mr. Addison to Mr. Pope	236
22 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	55 Mr. Pope to Mr. Addison	ibid.
23 From the same to the same.....	215	56 From the same to the Honourable *****	237
24 From the same to the same.....	216	57 From the same to Mr. Jervas	238
25 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	58 Mr. Jervas to Mr. Pope.....	ibid.
26 From the same to the same.....	217	59 Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas.....	239
27 From the same to the same.....	218	60 From the same to the Earl of Halifax	ibid.
28 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	61 Dr. Parnelle to Mr. Pope.....	240
29 From the same to the same.....	219	62 Mr. Pope to the Hon. James Craggs.	241
30 From the same to the same.....	220	63 From the same to Mr. Congreve.....	ibid.
31 From the same to the same.....	221	64 From the same to the same.....	242
32 From the same to the same.....	222	65 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
33 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	66 Mr. Congreve to Mr. Pope	243
		67 The Rev. Dean Berkley to Mr. Pope	244

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
68 Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas, in Ireland..	244	132 Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester	289
69 From the same to the same	245	133 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	290
70 From the same to the same	246	134 From the same to the same	291
71 From the same to Mr. Fenton	ibid.	135 Mr. Pope to Mr. Gay	292
72 Rev. Dean Berkeley to Mr. Pope.....	247	136 From the same to the same	293
73 Mr. Pope to ****.....	248	137 From the same to the same	ibid.
74 From the same to ****	239	138 From the same to the same	294
75 From the same to the Earl of Burlington	ibid.	139 Mr. Gay to Mr. F.....	295
76 From the same to the Duke of Buckingham	251	140 Mr. Pope to Mr. Gay	296
77 The Duke of Buckingham to Mr. Pope.....	254	141 From the same to the same	ibid.
78 Mr. Pope to the Duke of Buckingham	255	142 From the same to the same	297
79 Dr. Arbuthnot to Mr. Pope.....	256	143 From the same to the same	ibid.
80 Mr. Pope to Dr. Arbuthnot.....	257	144 From the same to Mrs. B.	298
81 From the same to the Earl of Oxford	ibid.	145 From the same to Hugh Bethel, Esq.....	ibid.
82 The Earl of Oxford to Mr. Pope... ..	258	146 From the same to the same	299
83 Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq... ..	ibid.	147 From the same to the same	300
84 Edward Blount, Esq. to Mr. Pope... ..	259	148 The Earl of Peterborow to Mr. Pope	ibid.
85 From the same to the same	260	149 Dr. Swift to the Earl of Peterborow	301
86 Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq... ..	ibid.	150 Mr. Pope to Mr. C.	ibid.
87 From the same to the same	261	151 From the same to Mr. Richardson	302
88 From the same to the same	262	152 From the same to Mr. Bethel	ibid.
89 Edward Blount, Esq. to Mr. Pope... ..	263	153 From the same to Dr. Arbuthnot ...	303
90 Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq....	264	154 From the same to Dr. Swift	304
91 From the same to the same	ibid.	155 Anthony Henley, Esq. to Dr. Swift	305
92 From the same to the same	265	156 Lord Bolingbroke to Dr. Swift.....	ibid.
93 From the same to the same	ibid.	157 Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.....	307
94 From the same to the same	266	158 Mr. Gay to Dr. Swift	308
95 From the same to the same	ibid.	159 Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift	309
96 From the same to the same	267	160 Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.....	ibid.
97 From the same to the Hon. Robert Digby	268	161 Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.....	310
98 From the same to the same	ibid.	162 Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.....	311
99 Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope	269	163 From the same to the same	312
100 Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby	270	164 Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.....	ibid.
101 Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope	ibid.	165 Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope	313
102 From the same to the same	271	166 Lord Bolingbroke to Dr. Swift	314
103 Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby	ibid.	167 Lord B. to Dr. Swift	315
104 Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope	272	168 Dr. Swift to Mr. Gay.....	316
105 From the same to the same	ibid.	169 From the same to the same	317
106 Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby	273	170 Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.....	318
107 From the same to the same	ibid.	171 Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.....	319
108 From the same to the same	274	172 Lady B—— G—— to Dr. Swift.....	ibid.
109 From the same to the same	ibid.	173 From the same to the same	320
110 Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope	275	174 From the same to the same	ibid.
111 Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby	276	175 From the same to the same	321
112 From the same to the same	277	176 From the same to the same	322
113 From the same to the same	ibid.	177 From the same to the same	ibid.
114 From the same to the same	278	178 From the same to the same	323
115 The Bishop of Rochester (Dr. Atterbury) to Mr. Pope	ibid.	179 The Duchess of —— to Dr. Swift... ..	324
116 Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester	279	180 Lady B—— G—— to Dr. Swift.	325
117 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	280	181 From the same to the same	ibid.
118 From the same to the same	281	182 Dr. Swift to the Duke of Dorset.....	326
119 Lord Chancellor Harcourt to Mr. Pope.....	ibid.		
120 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	282		
121 From the same to the same	283		
122 Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester	ibid.		
123 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	284		
124 Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester	ibid.		
125 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	285		
126 Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester	ibid.		
127 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	286		
128 From the same to the same	ibid.		
129 From the same to the same	287		
130 From the same to the same	ibid.		
131 Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester	288		

SECTION II.

Miscellaneous Letters.

1 Dr. Swift to Miss Jane Waryng.....	328
2 Dr. Tillotson to the Earl of Mulgrave	330
3 Earl of Mulgrave to Dr. Tillotson...	331
4 Dr. Lewis Atterbury to Bishop Atterbury	332
5 Bishop Atterbury to his brother ...	333
6 From the same to the same	ibid.
7 From the same to the same	ibid.
8 From the same to his son at Oxford	ibid.
9 From the same to Lord Townshend	334

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
10 The Bishop of Rochester to Mrs. Morice.....	ibid.	14 Dr. King to Bishop Atterbury.....	336
11 Mr. J. Evans to his brother in London	335	15 Duchess of Somerset to Lady Luxborough	337
12 The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope	ibid.	16 Countess of Hertford to Dr. Burnet, occasioned by some meditations the Doctor sent her, upon the death of her son, Lord Beauchamp	338
13 From the same to ***	336		

BOOK IV.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION I.

From the Letters of WILLIAM SHENSTONE, Esq. and Mr. GRAY, to and from their Friends.

1 Mr. Shenstone to a friend.....	340	27 Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on hearing that his letters to Mr. Whistler were destroyed	361
2 From the same to Mr. Jago, on the death of his father.....	341	28 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	362
3 From the same to Mr. Reynolds.....	342	29 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	ibid.
4 From the same to Mr. —, on his taking orders in the church	ibid.	30 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	363
5 From the same to a friend, expressing his dissatisfaction at the manner of life in which he is engaged	343	31 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	364
6 From the same to Mr. —, with an invitation to accompany him to town.....	344	32 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	ibid.
7 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	33 Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole	365
8 From the same to Mr. Graves, on benevolence and friendship	345	34 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	ibid.
9 From the same to the same.....	346	35 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	ibid.
10 From the same to the same, written in the hay harvest.....	ibid.	36 From the same to Mr. Walpole	366
11 From the same to the same, after the disappointment of a visit	347	37 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
12 From the same to the same, with Thoughts on Advice	348	38 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	367
13 From the same to the same.....	349	39 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
14 From the same to the same.....	350	40 Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.....	368
15 From the same to Mr. Jago	ibid.	41 From the same to Mr. West	ibid.
16 From the same to Mr. —, on his marriage.....	351	42 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	ibid.
17 From the same to Mr. Jago, with an invitation to the Leasowes.....	352	43 From the same to the same	369
18 From the same to a friend, disappointing him of a visit	353	44 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
19 From the same to Mr. Jago.....	354	45 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	ibid.
20 From the same to C——W——, Esq.....	355	46 From the same to the same.....	370
21 From the same to Mr. Graves, on the death of Mr. Shenstone's brother	ibid.	47 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	371
22 From the same to C——W——, Esq.	357	48 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	372
23 From the same to Mr. G——, on the receipt of his picture.....	ibid.	49 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	373
24 From the same to Mr. Jago.....	358	50 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	ibid.
25 From the same to the same.....	360	51 Mr. West to Mr. Gray	ibid.
26 From the same to Mr. Graves, on the death of Mr. Whistler	361	52 Mr. Gray to Mr. West	ibid.
		53 From the same to Dr. Wharton	374
		54 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
		55 From the same to the same.....	375
		56 From the same to Mr. Walpole.....	376
		57 From the same to the same	377
		58 From the same to Dr. Wharton	ibid.
		59 From the same to the same.....	378
		60 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
		61 From the same to the same.....	379
		62 From the same to Dr. Warburton ..	ibid.
		63 From the same to his mother	380
		64 From the same to Dr. Wharton	ibid.
		65 From the same to Mr. Walpole	381
		66 From the same to Dr. Wharton	382
		67 From the same to Mr. Walpole	ibid.
		68 From the same to Mr. Mason	383
		69 From the same to Dr. Wharton	ibid.
		70 From the same to the same.....	384
		71 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
		72 From the same to the same.....	385
		73 From the same to Mr. Mason	ibid.
		74 From the same to the same.....	386

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
75 Mr. Gray to Mr. Hurd.....	387	31 Dr. Smollett to Daniel Mackercher, Esq.....	421
76 From the same to Mr. Mason.....	ibid.	32 Dr. Isaac Schomberg to a Lady, on the Method of Reading for Female Improvement.....	424
77 From the same to Dr. Wharton.....	388	33 To Colonel R——s, in Spain.....	425
78 From the same to the same.....	389	34 John Garden to Archbishop Secker ..	426
79 From the same to Mr. Stonehewer.....	ibid.	35 Archbishop Secker to John Garden.....	ibid.
80 From the same to Dr. Wharton.....	390	36 John Garden to Archbishop Secker...	ibid.
81 From the same to Mr. Palgrave.....	391	37 Archbishop Secker to a Clergyman...	428
82 From the same to the same.....	ibid.		
83 From the same to Dr. Wharton.....	392		
84 From the same to Mr. Stonehewer ..	393		
85 From the same to Dr. Clarke.....	394		
86 From the same to Mr. Mason.....	ibid.		
87 From the same to Dr. Wharton.....	ibid.		
88 From the same to Mr. Mason	395		
89 From the same to Dr. Wharton.....	ibid.		
90 From the same to the same.....	396		
91 From the same to Mr. Mason.....	397		
92 From the same to Mr. Beattie.....	ibid.		
93 From the same to the Duke of Grafton.....	398		
94 From the same to Mr. Nicholls.....	ibid.		
95 From the same to Mr. Beattie.....	ibid.		
96 From the same to Mr. Nicholls.....	399		
97 From the same to the same.....	ibid.		
98 From the same to the same.....	400		
99 From the same to Mr. Beattie.....	401		
100 From the same to Mr. Nicholls.....	402		
101 From the same to Dr. Wharton.....	ibid.		

SECTION II.

From the Letters of LAURENCE STERNE and others.

1 Mr. Sterne to Miss L——.....	404
2 From the same to Mrs. F——.....	405
3 From the same to J— H— S——, Esq.....	ibid.
4 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
5 From the same to Lady D——.....	406
6 From the same to David Garrick, Esq.....	407
7 From the same to Lady D——.....	408
8 From the same to Mrs. Sterne.....	ibid.
9 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
10 From the same to Lady D——.....	409
11 From the same to Mr. E——.....	ibid.
12 From the same to Mr. Foley, at Paris.....	410
13 From the same to J— H— S——, Esq.....	411
14 From the same to Mr. Foley.....	412
15 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
16 From the same to the same.....	413
17 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
18 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
19 From the same to the same.....	414
20 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
21 From the same to the same.....	415
22 From the same to Mrs. F——.....	ibid.
23 From the same to Miss Sterne.....	416
24 From the same to J— H— S——, Esq.....	ibid.
25 From the same to Mr. Foley.....	417
26 From the same to David Garrick, Esq.....	ibid.
27 From the same to Mr. W——.....	418
28 From the same to Miss Sterne.....	ibid.
29 David Hume, Esq. to——.....	419
30 From the same to Dr. Campbell....	420

SECTION III.

From the Letters of the late Earl of CHATHAM, Mrs. ELIZABETH MONTAGU, Lady MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE, Lord CHESTERFIELD, Dr. JOHNSON, and others.

1 From the late Earl of Chatham to his Nephew, Thomas Pitt, Esq. (afterwards Lord Camelford).....	429
2 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
3 From the same to the same.....	430
4 From the same to the same.....	431
5 From the same to the same.....	433
6 From the same to the same.....	434
7 From the same to the same.....	435
8 From the same to the same.....	436
9 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
10 From the same to the same.....	437
11 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
12 From the same to the same.....	438
13 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
14 From the same to the same.....	439
15 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
16 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
17 From the same to the same.....	440
18 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
19 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
20 From the same to the same.....	441
21 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
22 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
23 From the same to the same.....	442
24 From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.....	ibid.
25 From the same to the same.....	443
26 From the same to the same.....	444
27 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
28 From the same to the same.....	445
29 From the same to the same.....	446
30 From the same to the same.....	447
31 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
32 From the same to Miss S. Robinson.....	448
33 From the same to the same.....	449
34 From the same to the same.....	450
35 From the same to the Rev. W. Friend.....	ibid.
36 From the same to the Duchess of Portland.....	451
37 From the same to the same.....	452
38 From the same to the same.....	453
39 From the same to the same.....	454
40 From the same to the same.....	456
41 From the same to the same.....	457
42 From the same to the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Friend.....	458
43 From the same to Miss S. Robinson.....	459
44 From the same to Mrs. Donnellan...	460
45 From the same to Miss S. Robinson.....	461

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
46 From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.....	462	100 Dr. Johnson to Mr. Boswell.....	506
47 From the same to the Rev. Dr. Shaw, F. R. S., &c. &c.....	464	101 From the same to Mr. James Macpherson.....	507
48 From the same to the Duchess of Portland.....	465	102 From the same to Mrs. Boswell.....	508
49 From the same to the same.....	467	103 From the same to Mr. Elphinstone.....	ibid.
50 From the same to the same.....	468	104 From the same to ———.....	ibid.
51 From the same to the same.....	469	105 From the same to Mrs. Thrale, on the Death of Mr. Thrale.....	509
52 From the same to the same.....	470	106 From the same to the same.....	510
53 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	107 From the same to Mr. Hector.....	ibid.
54 From the same to Mrs. Donnellan ..	471	108 From the same to James Boswell, Esq.....	ibid.
55 Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ———.....	472	109 From the same to the same.....	511
56 From the same to Mrs. S——.....	473	110 From the same to the same.....	512
57 From the same to Mrs. S. C.....	ibid.	111 From the same to Mrs. Thrale.....	ibid.
58 From the same to the Lady——.....	474	112 From the same to the same.....	513
59 From the same to the Countess of B——.....	475	113 From the same to Miss Susanna Thrale.....	514
60 From the same to Mrs. P——.....	476	114 From the same to Mrs. Thrale... ..	ibid.
61 From the same to the Countess of ———.....	477	115 From the same to the same.....	515
62 From the same to Mr. P——.....	478	116 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
63 From the same to the Countess of ———.....	479	117 From the same to Mrs. Chapone... ..	516
64 From the same to the Lady R——.....	481	118 From the same to Mrs. Thrale.....	ibid.
65 From the same to Mrs. J***.....	ibid.	119 From the same to the same.....	517
66 From the same to the Lady X.	482	120 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
67 From the same to Mr. ———.....	483	121 From the same to the same.....	518
68 From the same to the Countess of ———.....	484	122 From the same to the Rev. Dr. Taylor.....	ibid.
69 From the same to the same.....	485	123 From the same to Lord Chancellor Thurlow.....	519
70 From the same to the same.....	486	124 Miss ——— to the Rev. Dr. Horne... ..	ibid.
71 From the same to the Countess of B——.....	ibid.	125 Dr. Horne to Miss ———.....	520
72 From the same to the Lady R——... ..	487	126 Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton, at Hagley.....	521
73 From the same to the Countess of ———.....	488	127 From the same to the same.....	522
74 From the same to the Lady ———.....	489	128 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
75 From the same to Mr. Pope.....	490	129 From the same to the same.....	523
76 Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. Chenevix, Lord Bishop of Waterford.....	ibid.	130 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
77 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	131 From the same to the same.....	526
78 From the same to the same.....	491	132 S. Poyntz, Esq. to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.....	ibid.
79 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	133 Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.....	527
80 Dr. Swift to the Earl of Chesterfield ..	ibid.	134 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
81 The Earl of Chesterfield to Dr. Swift ..	492	135 From the same to the same.....	528
82 Dean Swift to the Earl of Chesterfield.....	493	136 From the same to the same.....	529
83 Lord Chesterfield to Sir Thomas Robinson, Bart.....	ibid.	137 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
84 The same to Dr. Cheyne of Bath.....	494	138 S. Poyntz, Esq. to Sir Thomas Lyttleton... ..	ibid.
85 John Dunning, Esq. to a Gentleman of the Inner Temple.....	ibid.	139 Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.....	530
86 Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinstone.....	495	140 The late Bishop Horne to a young Clergyman.....	531
87 From the same to the same.....	496	141 William Cowper, Esq. to Joseph Hill, Esq.	532
88 From the same to the Rev. Dr. Taylor.....	ibid.	142 From the same to Lady Hesketh. ...	ibid.
89 From the same to Miss Boothby.....	497	143 From the same to the same.....	533
90 From the same to the same.....	ibid.	144 From the same to the same.....	535
91 From the same to the Earl of Chesterfield.....	ibid.	145 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
92 From the same to Miss *****.....	498	146 From the same to Major Cowper ..	536
93 From the same to Miss Boothby.....	ibid.	147 From the same to Mrs. Cowper.....	ibid.
94 From the same to the same.....	499	148 From the same to the same.....	537
95 From the same to Joseph Baretti.....	ibid.	149 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin.....	538
96 From the same to the same.....	501	150 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
97 From the same to the same.....	502	151 From the same to the same.....	539
98 Mrs. Thrale to Mr. ———, on his Marriage.....	503	152 From the same to the Rev. John Newton.....	540
99 Dr. Johnson to Mr. Boswell.....	505	153 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin.....	ibid.
		154 From the same to Mrs. Cowper.....	541

CONTENTS.

xvii

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
155 William Cowper, Esq. to the Rev. William Unwin	542	208 William Cowper, Esq. to Lady Hesketh	588
156 From the same to the same	ibid.	209 From the same to the Rev. Walter Bagot	589
157 From the same to Mrs Cowper	543	210 From the same to Lady Hesketh ..	ibid.
158 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	544	211 From the same to the same	591
159 From the same to the same	ibid.	212 From the same to the same	592
160 From the same to Joseph Hill, Esq.	545	213 From the same to the same	593
161 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	546	214 From the same to the same	594
162 From the same to the same	547	215 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	595
163 From the same to the same	548	216 From the same to the same	596
164 From the same to the same	549	217 From the same to Lady Hesketh ..	597
165 From the same to the same	ibid.	218 From the same to the same	598
166 From the same to the same	550	219 From the same to Sam. Rose, Esq.	ibid.
167 From the same to the same	551	220 From the same to Lady Hesketh ..	599
168 From the same to the same	552	221 From the same to the same	ibid.
169 From the same to the same	ibid.	222 From the same to the same	600
170 From the same to the same	553	223 From the same to the same	601
171 From the same to the same	554		
172 From the same to the same	556		
173 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	557		
174 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	ibid.		
175 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	558		
176 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	559		
177 From the same to the same	560		
178 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	561		
179 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	562		
180 From the same to the same	563		
181 From the same to the same	564		
182 From the same to the same	565		
183 From the same to the same	566		
184 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	567		
185 From the same to the same	568		
186 From the same to the same	569		
187 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	ibid.		
188 From the same to the same	570		
189 From the same to the same	571		
190 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	572		
191 From the same to the same	573		
192 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	574		
193 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	575		
194 From the same to the same	576		
195 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	577		
196 From the same to the Rev. John Newton	578		
197 From the same to Joseph Hill, Esq.	579		
198 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	ibid.		
199 From the same to the same	580		
200 From the same to Joseph Hill, Esq.	581		
201 From the same to the Rev. William Unwin	582		
202 From the same to Lady Hesketh ..	583		
203 From the same to the same	584		
204 From the same to the same	ibid.		
205 From the same to the same	585		
206 From the same to the same	586		
207 From the same to the same	587		

SECTION IV.

From the Letters of Dr. BEATTIE, Sir WILLIAM JONES, and others.

1 Dr. Beattie to Robert Arbuthnot, Esq.	603
2 From the same to Sir Wm. Forbes	ibid.
3 From the same to the same	604
4 From the same to Dr. Blacklock ..	606
5 From the same to the Hon. Charles Boyd	607
6 From the same to Sir Wm. Forbes ..	608
7 From the same to the same	ibid.
8 From the same to Dr. Blacklock ..	610
9 From the same to Mrs. Inglis	611
10 From the same to the Right Hon. the Dowager Lady Forbes	613
11 From the same to Sir W. Forbes	614
12 From the same to Mrs. Montagu	ibid.
13 From the same to the same	615
14 From the same to the same	616
15 The Rev. Dr. Porteus to Dr. Beattie ..	617
16 Dr. Beattie to the Rev. Dr. Porteus ..	ibid.
17 From the same to the same	619
18 Mrs. Montagu to Dr. Beattie	620
19 Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu	621
20 From the same to the Hon. Mr. Baron Gordon	622
21 From the same to the Duchess of Gordon	623
22 From the same to the same	624
23 From the same to the same	626
24 From the same to Sir W. Forbes ..	ibid.
25 Mr. Jones, at the age of fourteen, to his Sister	627
26 From the same to Lady Spencer. ..	628
27 From the same to N. B. Halhed	629
28 From the same to Lady Spencer ..	630
29 From the same to the same	ibid.
30 From the same to C. Reviczki	631
31 From the same to J. Wilmot, Esq.	632
32 From the same to Mr. Hawkins	633
33 Dr. Hunt to Mr. Jones	ibid.
34 Mr. Jones to F. P. Bayer	634
35 From the same to Lord Althorpe ..	635
36 Edmund Burke to Mr. Jones	636
37 Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe	ibid.
38 From the same to the same	637

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
39 Mr. Jones to the Rev. E. Cartwright	638	96 Edward Gibbon, to the Right Hon.	
40 From the same to Dr. Wheeler.....	ibid.	Lord Sheffield.....	691
41 From the same to the Bishop of St.		97 From the same to the same	692
Asaph.....	639	98 From the same to the same	693
42 The Bishop of St. Asaph to Mr.		99 Anna Seward to George Hardinge,	
Jones	ibid.	Esq.	694
43 Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.....	640	100 From the same to Captain Seward .	695
44 From the same to Mr. Thomas		101 From the same to Miss Weston.....	697
Yeates.....	641	102 From the same to Thomas Swift,	
45 From the same to the Bishop of St.		Esq.	698
Asaph	ibid.	103 From the same to Thomas Christie,	
46 From the same to Lady Spencer	642	Esq.	700
47 Sir William Jones to Lord Ashbur-		104 From the same to Lady Gresley ...	701
ton.....	643	105 From the same to Mrs. Stokes	704
48 From the same to Dr. Patrick Rus-		106 From the same to Thomas Park,	
sell... ..	ibid.	Esq.	705
49 From the same to ———	644	107 From the same to Walter Scott, Esq.	708
50 From the same to Charles Chap-		108 From the same to Miss Fern	710
man, Esq.	ibid.	109 Mr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd	712
51 From the same to Miss E. Shipley..	645	110 Mr. Hurd to Dr. Warburton	ibid.
52 From the same to J. Shore, Esq. ...	ibid.	111 From the same to the same.....	713
53 From the same to the same	646	112 Dr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd.....	ibid.
54 From the same to Thomas Caldicot,		113 From the same to the same.....	714
Esq.	ibid.	114 Mr. Hurd to Dr. Warburton	ibid.
55 From the same to Mr. Justice Hyde	647	115 From the same to the Bishop of	
56 From the same to Sir Joseph Banks..	ibid.	Gloucester.....	716
57 From the same to Sir J. Macpherson,		116 The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr.	
Bart.....	648	Hurd.....	ibid.
58 From the same to Warren Hastings,		117 Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Glouces-	
Esq.....	649	ter	ibid.
59 From the same to Lord Teignmouth	ibid.	118 The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr.	
60 From Dr. Young to Mr. Richardson	650	Hurd.....	717
61 Mr. Richardson to Dr. Young	ibid.	119 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
62 Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson	651	120 Mr. Hurd to the Bp. of Gloucester...	718
63 Mr. Richardson to Miss Collier.....	652	121 The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr.	
64 From the same to the same	653	Hurd	719
65 Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.....	654	122 From the same to the same	720
66 Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore..	655	123 Mr. Hurd to the Bp. of Gloucester...	721
67 From the same to the same	656	124 The Bp. of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd	722
68 From the same to the same	658	125 From the same to the same.....	ibid.
69 From the same to the same	659	126 From the same to the same.....	723
70 Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson	660	127 Dr. Hurd to the Bp. of Gloucester...	ibid.
71 Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.....	661	128 The Bp. of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd	724
72 Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson	662	129 The Right Hon. C. J. Fox to Mr.	
73 Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.....	663	Wakefield.....	725
74 Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.....	ibid.	130 From the same to the same	ibid.
75 Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.....	664	131 From the same to the same	ibid.
76 Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson	ibid.	132 From the same to the same	ibid.
77 Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh	666	133 From the same to the same	726
78 From the same to the same	667	134 From the same to the same	ibid.
79 From the same to the same.....	668	135 From the same to the same	727
80 Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson	670	136 From the same to the same	ibid.
81 Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh	672	137 From the same to the same	ibid.
82 From the same to the same	674	138 From the same to the same	728
83 From the same to the same	677	139 From the same to the same	ibid.
84 Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson	678	140 From the same to the same	ibid.
85 Edward Gibbon, Esq. to his Father..	680	141 From the same to the same	729
86 From the same to J. B. Holroyd, Esq.	681	142 From the same to the same	ibid.
87 From the same to the same.....	682	143 From the same to the same	ibid.
88 From the same to the same, at		144 From the same to the same	750
Edinburgh	685	145 From the same to the same	ibid.
89 From the same to the same.....	684	146 From the same to the same	731
90 From the same to the same	685		
91 From the same to the Right Hon.			
Lord Sheffield.....	ibid.		
92 From the same to the Right Hon.			
Lady Sheffield	686		
93 From the same to the Right Hon.			
Lord Sheffield	687		
94 From the same to the same.....	688		
95 From the same to Mrs. Porten	689		

SECTION V.

*From the Letters of HORACE WALPOLE,
EARL OF ORFORD, and DR. FRANK-
LIN.*

1 The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard	
West, Esq.	733

CONTENTS.

xix

Letter	Page	Letter	Page
2 The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.	734	44 The Hon. Horace Wapole to the Earl of Strafford	783
3 From the same to the same.....	735	45 From the same to Lady Craven	784
4 From the same to the same.....	736	46 The Earl of Orford to Mrs. H. More..	785
5 The Hon. Horace Walpole and Mr. Gray to Richard West, Esq.....	737	47 From the same to the Hon. H. S. Conway.....	786
6 The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.....	739	48 From the same to William Roscoe, Esq.....	787
7 From the same to John Chute, Esq....	740	49 From the same to the Countess of ****	788
8 From the same to Richard Bentley, Esq.....	742	50 From Dr. Franklin to Mr. George Whitfield	ibid.
9 From the same to the same.....	743	51 From the same to Miss Stevenson at Wanstead.	789
10 From the same to George Montague, Esq.....	745	52 From the same to John Alleyne, Esq.....	790
11 From the same to the same.....	747	53 From the same to Governor Franklin, New Jersey.....	791
12 From the same to the same.....	748	54 From the same to Dr. Priestley	ibid.
13 From the same to the same.....	749	55 From the same to Mrs. Thomas, at Lisle.	792
14 From the same to the same.....	751	56 From the same to Dr. Cowper, Boston.	793
15 From the same to the same.....	752	57 From the same to Dr. Price, London	ibid.
16 From the same to the same.....	753	58 From the same to General Washington.....	794
17 From the same to the Hon. H. S. Conway	754	59 From the same to Mr. Small, Paris..	ibid.
18 From the same to the same.....	755	60 From the same to Miss Georgiana Shipley..	795
19 From the same to George Montague, Esq.....	ibid.	61 From the same to the Rev. William Nixon	796
20 From the same to the same.....	757	62 From the same to Edmund Burke, Esq. M. P.	ibid.
21 From the same to the Hon. H. S. Conway.....	ibid.	63 From the same to the Rev. Dr. Priestley.....	ibid.
22 From the same to the same.....	758	64 From the same to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.....	797
23 From the same to the same.....	759	65 From the same to Miss Alexander....	798
24 From the same to George Montague, Esq.	ibid.	66 From the same to Mrs. Hewson	ibid.
25 From the same to the Rev. Mr. Cole.....	760	67 From the same to the Bishop of St. Asaph (Dr. Shipley).....	799
26 From the same to George Montague, Esq.....	761	68 From the same to Sir Joseph Banks... ..	800
27 From the same to the same.....	762	69 From the same to Mrs. Bache.....	ibid.
28 From the same to the same.....	763	70 From the same to B. Vaughan, Esq.	803
29 From the same to Mr. Gray.....	764	71 From the same to David Hartley, Esq. M. P.	806
30 From the same to the same.....	768	72 From the same to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.....	ibid.
31 From the same to George Montague, Esq.....	769	73 From the same to Mrs. Hewson, London.....	808
32 From the same to M. de Voltaire....	770	74 From the same to M. le Marquis de la Fayette	809
33 From the same to the same.....	771	75 From the same to Count de Buffon, Paris.....	810
34 From the same to the Hon. H. S. Conway.....	772	76 From the same to Dr. Rush.....	ibid.
35 From the same to the same.....	773	77 From the same to David Hartley, Esq.	811
36 From the same to Dr. Gem	775	78 From the same to *****.....	ibid.
37 From the same to the Rev. Mr. Cole	776		
38 From the same to the same.....	777		
39 From the same to the Earl of Strafford;	ibid.		
40 From the same to the Rev. Mr. Cole	778		
41 From the same to the Earl of Strafford	779		
42 From the same to the same.....	780		
43 From the same to Mr. Pinkerton.....	781		



Elegant Epistles



L O N D O N :

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ELEGANT EPISTLES.

BOOK THE FIRST.

ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL.

SECTION I.

FROM THE LETTERS OF MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO, TO SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS, AS TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM MELMOTH, ESQ.

LETTER I.

To Terentia, to my dearest Tullia, and to my Son.

Brundisium, April the 30th. [A. U. 695.]

IF you do not hear from me so frequently as you might, it is because I can neither write to you nor read your letters, without falling into greater grief than I am able to support; for though I am at all times indeed completely miserable, yet I feel my misfortunes with a particular sensibility upon those tender occasions.

Oh that I had been more indifferent to life! Our days would then have been, if not wholly unacquainted with sorrow, yet by no means thus wretched. However, if any hopes are still reserved to us of recovering some part at least of what we have lost, I shall not think that I have made altogether so imprudent a choice. But if our present fate is unalterably fixed—Ah! my dearest Terentia, if we are utterly and for ever abandoned by those gods whom you have so religiously adored, and by those men whom I have so faithfully served, let me see you as soon as possible, that I may have the satisfaction of breathing out my last departing sigh in your arms.

I have spent about a fortnight in this

place*, with my friend Marcus Flaccus. This worthy man did not scruple to exercise the rights of friendship and hospitality towards me, notwithstanding the severe penalties of that iniquitous law against those who should venture to give me reception†. May I one day have it in my power to make him a return to those generous services, which I shall ever most gratefully remember!

I am just going to embark, and purpose to pass through Macedonia in my way to Cyzicum‡. And now, my Terentia, thus wretched and ruined as I am, can I intreat you under all that weight of pain and sorrow with which, I too well know, you are oppressed, can I intreat you to be the partner and companion of my exile?—But must I then live without you? I know not how to reconcile myself to that hard condition; unless your

* Brundisium; a maritime town in the kingdom of Naples, now called *Brindisi*. Cicero, when he first withdrew from Rome, intended to have retired into Sicily; but being denied entrance by the governor of that island, he changed his direction, and came to Brundisium in his way to Greece.

† As soon as Cicero had withdrawn from Rome Clodius procured a law, which among other things enacted, "that no person should presume to harbour or receive him on pain of death."

‡ A considerable town in an island of the Propontis, which lay so close to the continent of Asia as to be joined with it by a bridge.

presence at Rome may be a mean of forwarding my return: if any hopes of that kind should indeed subsist. But should there, as I sadly suspect, be absolutely none; come to me, I conjure you, if it be possible: for never can I think myself completely ruined, whilst I shall enjoy my Terentia's company. But how will my dearest daughter dispose of herself? A question which you yourselves must consider: for, as to my own part, I am utterly at a loss what to advise. At all events, however, that dear unhappy girl must not take any measures that may injure her conjugal repose*, or affect her in the good opinion of the world. As for my son—let me not at least be deprived of the consolation of folding him for ever in my arms. But I must lay down my pen a few moments: my tears flow too fast to suffer me to proceed.

I am under the utmost solicitude, as I know not whether you have been able to preserve any part of your estate, or (what I sadly fear) are cruelly robbed of your whole fortune. I hope Piso† will always continue what you represent him to be, entirely ours.—As to the manumission of the slaves, I think you have no occasion to be uneasy. For with regard to your own, you only promised them their liberty as they should deserve it: but excepting Orpheus, there are none of them that have any great claim to this favour. As to mine, I told them, if my estate should be forfeited, I would give them their freedom, provided I could obtain the confirmation of that grant: but if I preserved my estate, that they should all of them, excepting only a few whom I particularly named, remain in their present condition. But this is a matter of little consequence.

With regard to the advice you give me, of keeping up my spirits, in the belief that I shall again be restored to my country; I only wish that I may have reason to encourage so desirable an expectation. In the mean time, I am greatly miserable, in the uncertainty when I shall hear from you, or what hand you will find to convey your letters. I would have waited for them at this place; but the master of the ship on which I am going to embark

could not be prevailed upon to lose the present opportunity of sailing.

For the rest, let me conjure you in my turn, to bear up under the pressure of our afflictions with as much resolution as possible. Remember that my days have all been honourable; and that I now suffer, not for my crimes, but my virtues. No, my Terentia, nothing can justly be imputed to me, but that I survived the loss of my dignities. However, if it was more agreeable to our children that I should thus live, let that reflection teach us to submit to our misfortunes with cheerfulness; insupportable as upon all other considerations they would undoubtedly be. But, alas! whilst I am endeavouring to keep up your spirits, I am utterly unable to preserve my own.

I have sent back the faithful Philetærus; as the weakness of his eyes made him incapable of rendering me any service. Nothing can equal the good offices I receive from Sallustius. Pescennius likewise has given me strong marks of his affection: and I hope he will not fail in his respect also to you. Sicca promised to attend me in my exile; but he changed his mind, and has left me at this place.

I intreat you to take all possible care of your health: and be assured, your misfortunes more sensibly affect me than my own. Adieu, my Terentia, thou most faithful and best of wives! Adieu. And thou, my dearest daughter, together with that other consolation of my life, my dear son, I bid you both most tenderly farewell.

LETTER II.

To Terentia, to my dearest Tullia, and to my Son.

Thessalonica‡, Oct. the 5th. [A. U. 695.]

IMAGINE not, my Terentia, that I write longer letters to others than to yourself: be assured at least, if ever I do, it is merely because those I receive from them require a more particular answer. The truth of it is, I am always at a loss what to write: and as there is nothing in the present dejection of my mind, that I perform with greater reluctance in general; so I never attempt it with regard to you and my dearest daughter, that it

* Tullia was at this time married to Caius Piso Frugi, a young nobleman of one of the best families in Rome.

† Cicero's son-in-law.

‡ A city in Macedonia, now called Salonichi.

does not cost me a flood of tears. For how can I think of you without being pierced with grief in the reflection, that I have made those completely miserable, whom I ought, and wished, to have rendered perfectly happy? And I should have rendered them so, if I had acted with less timidity.

Piso's behaviour towards us, in this season of our afflictions, has greatly endeared him to my heart: and I have, as well as I was able in the present discomposure of my mind, exhorted him to continue them.

I perceive you much depend upon the new tribunes: and if Pompey perseveres in his present disposition, I am inclined to think that your hopes will not be disappointed; though I must confess, I have some fears with respect to Crassus. In the mean while I have the satisfaction to find, what indeed I had reason to expect, that you act with great spirit and tenderness in all my concerns. But I lament it should be my cruel fate to expose you to so many calamities, whilst you are thus generously endeavouring to ease the weight of mine. Be assured it was with the utmost grief I read the account which Publius sent me, of the opprobrious manner in which you were dragged from the temple of Vesta to the office of Valerius*. Sad reverse indeed! that thou, the dearest object of my fondest desires, that my Terentia, to whom such numbers were wont to look up for relief, should be herself a spectacle of the most affecting distress! and that I, who have saved so many others from ruin, should have ruined both myself and my family by my own indiscretion!

As to what you mention with regard to the area belonging to my house; I shall never look upon myself as restored to my country, till that spot of ground is again in my possession†. But this is a point that does not depend upon ourselves. Let me rather express my concern for what does: and lament that dis-

tressed as your circumstances already are, you should engage yourself in a share of those expenses which are incurred upon my account. Be assured, if ever I should return to Rome, I shall easily recover my estate: but should fortune continue to prosecute me, will you, thou dear unhappy woman, will you fondly throw away in gaining friends to a desperate cause, the last scanty remains of your broken fortunes? I conjure you then, my dearest Terentia, not to involve yourself in any charges of that kind: let them be borne by those who are able, if they are willing, to support the weight. In a word, if you have any affection for me, let not your anxiety upon my account injure your health; which, alas! is already but too much impaired. Believe me, you are the perpetual subject of my waking and sleeping thoughts: and as I know the assiduity you exert on my behalf, I have a thousand fears lest your strength should not be equal to so continued a fatigue. I am sensible at the same time, that my affairs depend entirely upon your assistance; and therefore that they may be attended with the success you hope and so zealously endeavour to obtain, let me earnestly intreat you to take care of your health.

I know not whom to write to, unless to those who first write to me, or whom you particularly mention in your letters. As you and Tullia are of opinion that I should not retreat farther from Italy, I have laid aside that design. Let me hear from you both as soon as possible, particularly if there should be any fairer prospect of my return. Farewell, ye dearest objects of my most tender affection, farewell.

LETTER III.

To the same.

Dyrrachium ‡, Nov. 26. [A. U. 695.]

I LEARN by the letters of several of my friends, as well as from general report, that you discover the greatest fortitude of mind, and that you solicit my affairs with unwearied application. Oh, my Terentia, how truly wretched am I, to be the

* Terentia had taken sanctuary in the temple of Vesta; but was forcibly dragged out from thence by the directions of Clodius, in order to be examined at a public office, concerning her husband's effects.

† After Clodius had procured the law against Cicero already taken notice of, he consecrated the area where his house in Rome stood, to the perpetual service of religion, and erected a temple upon it to the Goddess of Liberty.

‡ A city in Macedonia, now called *Durazzo*, in the Turkish dominions. This letter, though dated from Dyrrachium, appears to have been wholly written, except the postscript, at Thessalonica.

occasion of such severe misfortunes to so faithful, so generous, and so excellent a woman ! And my dearest Tullia too ! that she, who was once so happy in her father, should now derive from him such bitter sorrows ! But how shall I express the anguish I feel for my little boy ! who became acquainted with grief as soon as he was capable of any reflection *. Had these afflictions happened, as you tenderly represent them, by an unavoidable fate, they would have sat less heavy on my heart. But they are altogether owing to my own folly, in imagining I was loved where I was secretly envied, and in not joining with those who were sincerely desirous of my friendship†. Had I been governed, indeed, by my own sentiments, without relying so much on those of my weak or wicked advisers, we might still, my Terentia, have been happy. However, since my friends encourage me to hope, I will endeavour to restrain my grief, lest the effect it may have upon my health should disappoint your tender efforts for my restoration. I am sensible at the same time of the many difficulties that must be conquered ere that point can be affected ; and that it would have been much easier to have maintained my post, than it is to recover it. Nevertheless, if all the tribunes are in my interest ; if Lentulus is really as zealous in my cause as he appears ; and if Pompey and Cæsar likewise concur with him in the same views, I ought not, most certainly, to despair.

With regard to our slaves ; I am willing to act as our friends, you tell me, advise. As to your concern in respect to the plague which broke out here ; it is entirely cesaed : and I had the good fortune to escape all infection. However, it was my desire to have changed my present situation for some more retired place in Epirus, where I might be secure from Piso and his soldiers‡. But the obliging

* Cicero's son was at this time about eight years of age.

† Cæsar and Crassus frequently solicited Cicero to unite himself to their party, promising to protect him from the outrages of Clodius, provided he would fall in with their measures.

‡ Lucius Calphurnius Piso, who was consul this year with Gabinius: they were both the professed enemies of Cicero, and supported Clodius in his violent measures. The province of Macedonia had fallen to the former, and he was now preparing to set out for his government, where his troops were daily arriving.

Plancius was unwilling to part with me, and still indeed detains me here, in the hope that we may return together to Rome§. If ever I should live to see that happy day ; if ever I should be restored to my Terentia, to my children, and to myself, I shall think all the tender solitudes we have suffered during this sad separation abundantly repaid.

- Nothing can exceed the affection and humanity of Piso's|| behaviour towards every one of us : and I wish he may receive from it as much satisfaction as I am persuaded he will honour.—I was far from intending to blame you with respect to my brother ; but it is much my desire, especially as there are so few of you, that you should live together in the most perfect harmony. I have made my acknowledgments where you desired, and acquainted the persons you mention that you had informed me of their services.

As to the estate you propose to sell : alas ! my dear Terentia, think well of the consequence : think what would become of our unhappy boy, should fortune still continue to persecute us. But my eyes stream too fast to suffer me to add more : nor would I draw the same tender flood from yours. I will only say, that if my friends should not desert me, I shall be in no distress for money : and if they should, the money you can raise by the sale of this estate will little avail. I conjure you then by all our misfortunes, let us not absolutely ruin our poor boy, who is well nigh totally undone already. If we can but raise him above indigence, a moderate share of good fortune and merit will be sufficient to open his way to whatever else we can wish him to obtain. Take care of your health, and let me know by an express how your negotiations proceed, and how affairs in general stand.—My fate must now be soon determined.—I tenderly salute my son and daughter, and bid you all farewell.

P. S. I came hither not only as it is a free city¶, and much in my interest, but as it is situated likewise near Italy. But if I should find any inconvenience from its being a town of such great re-

§ Plancius was at this time quæstor in Macedonia, and distinguished himself by many generous offices to Cicero in his exile.

|| Cicero's son-in-law.

¶ That is, a city which had the privilege, though in the dominions of the Roman republic, to be governed by its own laws.

sort, I shall remove elsewhere, and give you due notice.

LETTER IV.

To Terentia.

Dyrrachium, Nov, the 30th. [A. U. 695]

I RECEIVED three letters from you by the hands of Aristocritus, and have wept over them till they are almost defaced with my tears. Ah! my Terentia, I am worn out with grief: nor do my own personal misfortunes more severely torture my mind, than those with which you and my children are oppressed. Unhappy indeed as you are, I am still infinitely more so; as our common afflictions are attended with this aggravating circumstance to myself, that they are justly to be imputed to my imprudence alone. I ought, most undoubtedly, either to have avoided the danger, by accepting the commission which was offered me; or to have repelled force by force, or bravely to have perished in the attempt. Whereas nothing could have been more unworthy of my character, or more pregnant with misery, than the scheme I have pursued. I am overwhelmed, therefore, not only with sorrow, but with shame: yes, my Terentia, I blush to reflect that I did not exert that spirit I ought for the sake of so excellent a wife and such amiable children. The distress in which you are all equally involved, and your own ill state of health in particular, are ever in my thoughts: as I have the mortification at the same time to observe, that there appear but slender hopes of my being recalled. My enemies, in truth, are many; while those who are jealous of me are almost innumerable; and though they found great difficulty in driving me from my country, it will be extremely easy for them to prevent my return. However, as long as you have any hopes that my restoration may be effected, I will not cease to co-operate with your endeavours for that purpose, lest my weakness should seem upon all occasions to frustrate every measure in my favour. In the mean while, my person (for which you are so tenderly concerned) is secure from all danger: as in truth I am so completely wretched, that even my enemies themselves must wish, in mere malice, to preserve my life. Nevertheless, I shall not

fail to observe the caution you kindly give me.

I have sent my acknowledgments by Dexippus to the persons you desired me, and mentioned at the same time, that you had informed me of their good offices. I am perfectly sensible of those which Piso exerts towards us with so uncommon a zeal: and indeed it is a circumstance which all the world speaks of to his honour. Heaven grant I may live to enjoy with you and our children the common happiness of so valuable a relation*.

The only hope I have now left, arises from the new tribunes; and that too depends upon the steps they shall take in the commencement of their office: for if they should postpone my affair, I shall give up all expectations of its ever being effected. Accordingly I have dispatched Aristocritus, that you may send me immediate notice of the first measures they shall pursue, together with the general plan upon which they purpose to conduct themselves. I have likewise ordered Dexippus to return to me with all expedition, and have written to my brother to request he would give me frequent information in what manner affairs proceed. It is with a view of receiving the earliest intelligence from Rome, that I continue at Dyrrachium; a place where I can remain in perfect security, as I have upon all occasions distinguished this city by my particular patronage. However, as soon as I shall receive intimation that my enemies† are approaching, it is my resolution to retire into Epirus.

In answer to your tender proposal of accompanying me in my exile: I rather choose you should continue in Rome; as I am sensible it is upon you that the principal burthen of my affairs must rest. If your generous negotiations should succeed, my return will prevent the necessity of that journey; if otherwise—But I need not add the rest. The next letter I shall receive from you, or at

* He had the great misfortune to be disappointed of his wish; for Piso died soon after this letter was written. Cicero represents him as a young nobleman of the greatest talents and application, who devoted his whole time to the improvements of his mind, and the exercise of eloquence: as one whose moral qualifications were no less extraordinary than his intellectual, and in short as possessed of every accomplishment and virtue that could endear him to his friends, to his family, and to the public.

† The troops of Piso.

most the subsequent one, will determine me in what manner to act. In the mean time I desire you will give me a full and faithful information how things go on : though indeed I have now more reason to expect the final result of this affair, than an account of its progress.

Take care of your health I conjure you ; assuring yourself that you are, as you ever have been, the object of my fondest wishes. Farewell, my dear Terentia ! I see you so strongly before me whilst I am writing, that I am utterly spent with the tears I have shed. Once more, farewell.

LETTER V.

To Marcus Marius.*

[A. U. 698]

IF your general valetudinary disposition prevented you from being a spectator of our late public entertainments †, it is more to fortune than to philosophy that I am to impute your absence. But if you declined our party for no other reason than as holding in just contempt what the generality of the world so absurdly admire, I must at once congratulate you both on your health and your judgment. I say this upon a supposition, however, that you were enjoying the philosophical advantages of that delightful scene, in which, I imagine, you were almost wholly deserted. At the same time that your neighbours, probably, were nodding over the dull humour of our trite farces, my friend, I dare say, was indulging his morning meditations in that elegant apartment from whence you have opened a prospect to Sejanum, through the Stabian hills ‡. And whilst

* The person to whom this letter is addressed seems to have been of a temper and constitution that placed him far below the ambition of being known to posterity. But a private letter from Cicero's hand has been sufficient to dispel the obscurity he appears to have loved, and to render his retirement conspicuous.

† They were exhibited by Pompey at the opening of his theatre ; one of the most magnificent structures of ancient Rome ; and so extensive as to contain no less than 30,000 spectators. It was built after the model of one which he saw at Mitylene, in his return from the Mithridatic war ; and adorned with the noblest ornaments of statuary and painting. Some remains of this immense building still subsist.

‡ Sejanum is found in no other ancient author. Stabiæ was a maritime town in Campania, situated upon the bay of Naples, from whence the adjoining hills here mentioned took their name.

you were employing the rest of the day in those various polite amusements which you have the happy privilege to plan out for yourself ; we, alas ! had the mortification of tamely enduring those dramatical representations, to which Mælius, it seems, our professed critic, had given his infallible sanction : but as you will have the curiosity, perhaps, to require a more particular account, I must tell you, that though our entertainments were extremely magnificent indeed, yet they were by no means such as you would have relished ; at least if I may judge of your taste by my own. Some of those actors who had formerly distinguished themselves with great applause, but had long since retired, I imagined, in order to preserve the reputation they had raised, were now again introduced upon the stage ; as in honour, it seems, of the festival. Among these was my old friend Æsopus : but so different from what we once knew him, that the whole audience agreed he ought to be excused from acting any more. For when he was pronouncing the celebrated oath,

If I deceive, be Jove's dread vengeance hurl'd,
&c.

the poor old man's voice failed him ; and he had not strength to go through with the speech. As to the other parts of our theatrical entertainments, you know the nature of them so well, that it is scarce necessary to mention them. They had less indeed to plead in their favour than even the most ordinary representations of this kind can usually claim. The enormous parade with which they were attended, and which, I dare say, you would very willingly have spared, destroyed all the grace of the performance. What pleasure could it afford to a judicious spectator, to see a thousand mules prancing about the stage, in the tragedy of Clytæmnestra ; or whole regiments accounted in foreign armour, in that of the *Trojan Horse* ? In a word, what man of sense could be entertained with viewing a mock army drawn up on the stage in battle array ? These, I confess, are spectacles extremely well adapted to captivate vulgar eyes ; but undoubtedly would have had no charm in your's. In plain truth, my friend, you would have received more amusement from the dullest piece that Protogenes

could possibly have read to you* (my own orations, however, let me always except), than we meet with at these ridiculous shows. I am well persuaded, at least, you could not regret the loss of our Oscian and Grecian farces†. Your own noble senate will always furnish you with drollery sufficient of the former kind‡; and as to the latter, I know you have such an utter aversion to every thing that bears the name of Greek, that you will not even travel the Grecian road to your villa. As I remember you once despised our formidable gladiators, I cannot suppose you would have looked with less contempt on our athletic performers: and, indeed, Pompey himself acknowledges, that they did not answer the pains and expense they had cost him. The remainder of our diversions consisted in combats of wild beasts§, which were exhibited every morning and afternoon during five days successively; and it must be owned, they were magnificent. Yet, after all, what entertainment can possibly arise to an elegant and humanised mind, from seeing a noble beast struck to the heart by its merciless hunter, or one of our own weak species cruelly mangled by an animal of much superior strength? But were there any thing really worth observing in spectacles of this savage kind, they are spectacles extremely familiar to you; and those I am speaking of had not any peculiar novelty to recommend them. The last day's sport was composed entirely of elephants, which, though they made the common people

stare indeed, did not seem, however, to afford them any great satisfaction. On the contrary, the terrible slaughter of these poor animals created a general commiseration; as it is a prevailing notion, that these creatures in some degree participate of our rational faculties.

That you may not imagine I had the happiness of being perfectly at my ease during the whole of this pompous festival, I must acquaint you, that while the people were amusing themselves at the plays, I was almost killed with the fatigue of pleading for your friend Gallus Caninus. Were the world as much inclined to favour my retreat, as they shewed themselves in the case of Æsopus, believe me, I would for ever renounce my art, and spend the remainder of my days with you and some others of the same philosophical turn. The truth of it is, I began to grow weary of this employment, even at a time when youth and ambition prompted my perseverance; and I will add too, when I was at full liberty to exercise it in defence of those only whom I was inclined to assist. But in my present circumstances, it is absolute slavery: for, on the one side, I never expect to reap any advantage from my labours of this kind; and, on the other, in compliance with solicitations which I cannot refuse, I am sometimes under the disagreeable necessity of appearing as an advocate in behalf of those who ill deserve that favour at my hands. For these reasons, I am framing every possible pretence for living hereafter according to my own taste and sentiments; as I highly both approve and applaud that retired scene of life which you have so judiciously chosen. I am sensible at the same time, that this is the reason you so seldom visit Rome. However, I the less regret that you do not see it oftener, as the numberless displeasing occupations in which I am engaged would prevent me from enjoying the entertainment of your conversation, or giving you that of mine; if mine, indeed, can afford you any. But if ever I should be so fortunate as to disentangle myself, in some degree at least (for I am contented not to be wholly released), from these perplexing embarrassments, I will undertake to shew even my elegant friend, wherein the truest refinements of life consist. In the mean while, continue to take care of your

* It was usual with persons of distinction amongst the Romans to keep a slave in their family, whose sole business it was to read to them. Protopenes seems to have attended Marius in that capacity.

† The Oscian farces were so called from the Osci, an ancient people of Campania, from whom the Romans received them. They seem to have been of the same kind with our Bartholomew drolls, and to have consisted of low and obscene humour.

‡ The municipal or corporate towns in Italy were governed by magistrates of their own, who probably made much the same sort of figure in their rural senate, as our burgesses in their town hall.

§ Beasts of the wildest and most uncommon kinds were sent for, upon these occasions, from every corner of the known world: and Dion Cassius relates, that no less than 500 lions were killed at these hunting matches with which Pompey entertained the people.

health, that you may be able, when that happy time shall arrive, to accompany me in my litter to my several villas.

You must impute it to the excess of my friendship, and not to the abundance of my leisure, that I have lengthened this letter beyond my usual extent. It was merely in compliance with a request in one of yours, where you intimate a desire that I would compensate in this manner what you lost by not being present at our public diversions. I shall be extremely glad, if I have succeeded; if not, I shall have the satisfaction however to think, that you will for the future be more inclined to give us your company on these occasions, than to rely on my letters for your amusement. Farewell.

LETTER VI.

To Marcus Licinius Crassus.

[A. U. 699.]

I AM persuaded that all your friends have informed you of the zeal with which I lately both defended and promoted your dignities; as indeed it was too warm and too conspicuous to have been passed over in silence. The opposition I met with from the consuls*, as well as from several others of consular rank, was the strongest I ever encountered: and you must now look upon me as your declared advocate upon all occasions where your glory is concerned. Thus have I abundantly compensated for the intermission of those good offices, which the friendship between us had long given you a right to claim, but which, by a variety of accidents, have lately been somewhat interrupted. There never was a time, believe me, when I wanted an inclination to cultivate your esteem, or promote your interest; though, it must be owned, a certain set of men, who are the bane of all amicable intercourse, and who envied us the mutual honour that resulted from ours, have upon some occasions been so unhappily successful as to create a coolness between us. It has happened, however (what I rather wished than expected), that I have found an opportunity, even when your affairs were

in the most prosperous train, of giving a public testimony by my services to you, that I always most sincerely preserved the remembrance of our former amity. The truth is, I have approved myself your friend, not only to the full conviction of your family in particular, but of all Rome in general. In consequence of which, that most valuable of women, your excellent wife†, together with those illustrious models of virtue and filial piety, your two amiable sons, have perpetual recourse to my assistance and advice: and the whole world is sensible that no one is more zealously disposed to serve you than myself.

Your family correspondents have informed you, I imagine, of what has hitherto passed in your affair, as well as of what is at present in agitation. As for myself, I intreat you to do me the justice to believe, that it was not any sudden start of inclination, which disposed me to embrace this opportunity of vindicating your honour; on the contrary, it was my ambition, from the first moment I entered the Forum, to be ranked in the number of your friends‡. I have the satisfaction to reflect, that I have never, from that time to this hour, failed in the highest sentiments of esteem for you; and I doubt not, you have always retained the same affectionate regard towards me. If the effects of this mutual disposition have been interrupted by any little suspicions (for suspicions only I am sure they were), be the remembrance of them for ever blotted out of our hearts. I am persuaded, indeed, from those virtues which form *your* character, and from those which I am desirous should distinguish *mine*, that our friendly union in the present conjuncture cannot but be attended with equal honour to us both. What instances you may be willing to give me of your esteem, must be left to your own determination: but they will be such, I flatter myself, as may tend most to advance my dignities. For my own part, I faithfully promise the utmost exertion of my best services in every article wherein I can contribute to increase yours. Many, I know, will be

† This lady's name was Tertulla.

* The consuls of this year were L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, and Appius Claudius Pulcher.

‡ Crassus was almost ten years older than Cicero; so that when the latter first appeared at the bar, the former had already established a character by his oratorical abilities.

my rivals in these amicable offices : but it is a contention in which all the world, I question not, and particularly your two sons, will acknowledge my superiority. Be assured, I love them both in a very uncommon degree, though I will own that Publius is my favourite. From his infancy, indeed, he discovered a singular regard to me ; as he particularly distinguishes me at this time with all the marks even of filial respect and affection.

Let me desire you to consider this letter, not as a strain of unmeaning compliment, but as a sacred and solemn covenant of friendship, which I shall most sincerely and religiously observe. I shall now persevere in being the advocate of your honours, not only from a motive of affection, but from a principle of constancy : and without any application on your part, you may depend on my embracing every opportunity, wherein I shall think my services may prove agreeable to your interest or your inclinations. Can you once doubt, then, that any request to me for this purpose, either by yourself or your family, will meet with a most punctual observance ? I hope, therefore, you will not scruple to employ me in all your concerns, of what nature or importance soever, as one who is most faithfully your friend : and that you will direct your family to apply to me in all their affairs of every kind, whether relating to you or to themselves, to their friends or their dependents. And be assured, I shall spare no pains to render your absence as little uneasy to them as possible. Farewell.

LETTER VII.

To Julius Cæsar.*

[A. U. 699.]

I AM going to give an instance how much I rely upon your affectionate services, not only towards myself, but in favour also of my friends. It was my intention, if I had gone abroad in any foreign employment, that Trebatius†

* Cæsar was at this time in Gaul, preparing for his first expedition into Britain.

† This person seems to have been in the number of Cæsar's particular favourites. He appears in this earlier part of his life to have been of a more gay and indolent disposition than is consistent with making a figure in business ; but he afterwards, however, became a

should have accompanied me : and he would not have returned without receiving the highest and most advantageous honours I should have been able to have conferred upon him. But as Pompey, I find, defers setting out upon his commission longer than I imagined, and I am apprehensive likewise that the doubts you know I entertain in regard to my attending him, may possibly prevent, as they will certainly at least delay, my journey ; I take the liberty to refer Trebatius to *your* good offices, for those benefits he expected to have received from mine. I have ventured indeed to promise, that he will find you full as well disposed to advance his interest, as I have always assured him he would find me ; and a very extraordinary circumstance occurred, which seemed to confirm this opinion I entertained of your generosity. For, in the very instant I was talking with Balbus upon this subject, your letter was delivered to me : in the close of which you pleasantly tell me, that “ in compliance with my request, you will make Orfius king of Gaul, or assign him over to Lepta, and advance any other person whom I should be inclined to recommend.” This had so remarkable a coincidence with our discourse that it struck both Balbus and myself as a sort of happy omen that had something in it more than accidental. As it was my intention, therefore, before I received your letter, to have transmitted Trebatius to you ; so I now consign him to your patronage as upon your own invitation. Receive him, then, my dear Cæsar, with your usual generosity, and distinguish him with every honour that my solicitations can induce you to confer. I do not recommend him in the manner you so justly rallied, when I wrote to you in favour of Orfius : but I will take upon me to assure you, in true Roman sincerity, that there lives not a man of greater modesty and merit. I must not forget to mention also (what indeed is his distinguishing qualification), that he is eminently skilled in the laws of his country, and happy in an uncommon strength of memory. I will not point out any particular piece of preference, which I wish you to bestow upon

very celebrated lawyer ; and one of the most agreeable satires of Horace is addressed to him under that honourable character.

him : I will only in general intreat you to admit him into a share of your friendship. Nevertheless, if you should think proper to distinguish him with the tribunate or prefecture*, or any other little honours of that nature, I shall have no manner of objection. In good earnest, I entirely resign him out of my hands into yours, which never were lifted up in battle, or pledged in friendship, without effect. But I fear I have pressed you farther upon this occasion than was necessary : however, I know you will excuse my warmth in the cause of a friend. Take care of your health, and continue to love me. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

To Trebatius.

[A. U. 699.]

I NEVER write to Cæsar or Balbus without taking occasion to mention you in the advantageous terms you deserve ; and this in a style that evidently distinguishes me for your sincere well-wisher. I hope therefore you will check this idle passion for the elegancies of Rome, and resolutely persevere in the purpose of your journey, till your merit and assiduity shall have obtained the desired effect. In the mean time, your friends here will excuse your absence, no less than the ladies of Corinth did that of Medea in the play†, when she artfully persuades them not to impute it to her as a crime, that she had forsaken her country : for, as she tells them,

There are who distant from their native soil,
Still for their own and country's glory toil :
While some, fast rooted to their parent spot,
In life are useless, and in death forgot.

In this last inglorious class you would

* The military tribunes were next in rank to the lieutenants or commanders in chief under the general ; as the *præfectus legionis* was the most honourable post in the Roman armies after that of the military tribunes. The business of the former was, among other articles, to decide all controversies that arose among the soldiers ; and that of the latter was to carry the chief standard of the legion.

† Medea, being enamoured of Jason, assisted him in obtaining the golden fleece, and then fled with him from her father's court. He afterwards however deserted her for Creusa, the daughter of Creon king of Corinth, whom Medea destroyed by certain magical arts. Ennius, a Roman poet, who flourished about a century before the date of this letter, formed a play upon this story.

most certainly have been numbered, had not your friends all conspired in forcing you from Rome. — But more of this another time : in the mean while let me advise you, who know so well how to manage securities for others, to *secure* yourself from the British charioteers‡. And since I have been *playing* the Medea, let me make my exit with the following lines of the same tragedy, which are well worth your constant remembrance : —

His wisdom, sure, on folly's confines lies,
Who, wise for others, for himself's unwise.

Farewell.

LETTER IX.

To the same.

[A. U. 699.]

I TAKE all opportunities of writing in your favour ; and I should be glad you would let me know with what success. My chief reliance is on Balbus : in my letters to whom I frequently and warmly recommend your interest. But why do you not let me hear from you every time my brother dispatches a courier ?

I am informed there is neither gold nor silver in all Britain§. If that should be the case, I would advise you to seize one of the enemy's military cars, and drive back to us with all expedition. But if you think you shall be able to make your fortune without the assistance of British spoils, by all means establish yourself in Cæsar's friendship. To be serious, both my brother and Balbus will be of great service to you for that purpose ; but, believe me, your own merit and assiduity will prove your best recommendation. You have every favourable circumstance indeed for your advancement that can be wished. On the one hand, you are in the prime and vigour of

‡ The armies of the ancient Britons were partly composed of troops who fought in open chariots, to the axletrees of which were fixed a kind of short scythe.

§ A notion had prevailed among the Romans that Britain abounded in gold and silver mines, and this report, it is probable, first suggested to Cæsar the design of conquering Britain. It was soon discovered, however, that these sources of wealth existed only in their own imagination ; and all their hopes of plunder ended in the little advantage they could make by the sale of their prisoners. Cicero, taking notice of this circumstance to Atticus, ridicules the poverty and ignorance of our British ancestors.

your years ; as on the other, you are serving under a commander distinguished for the generosity of his disposition, and to whom you have been recommended in the strongest terms. In a word, there is not the least fear of your success, if your own concurrence be not wanting. Farewell.

LETTER X.

To Trebatius.

[A. U. 699.]

I HAVE received a very obliging letter from Cæsar, wherein he tells me, that though his numberless occupations have hitherto prevented him from seeing you so often as he wishes, he will certainly find an opportunity of being better acquainted with you. I have assured him, in return, how extremely acceptable his generous services to you would prove to myself. But surely you are much too precipitate in your determinations ; and I could not but wonder that you should have refused the advantages of a tribune's commission, especially as you might have been excused, it seems, from the functions of that post. If you continue to act thus indiscreetly, I shall certainly exhibit an *information* against you to your friends Vacerra and Manilius. I dare not venture, however, to *lay the case* before Cornelius : for, as you profess to have learned all your wisdom from his instructions ; to arraign the pupil of imprudence, would be a tacit reflection, you know, upon the tutor. But in good earnest, I conjure you not to lose the fairest opportunity of making your fortune, that probably will ever fall again in your way.

I frequently recommend your interests to Precianus, whom you mention ; and he writes me word that he has done you some good offices. Let me know of what kind they are. I expect a letter upon your arrival in Britain. Farewell.

LETTER XI.

To the same.

[A. U. 699.]

I HAVE made your acknowledgments to my brother, in pursuance of your request ; and am glad to have an occasion

of applauding you for being fixed at last in some settled resolution. The style of your former letters, I will own, gave me a good deal of uneasiness. And allow me to say, that in some of them you discovered an impatience to return to the polite refinements of Rome, which had the appearance of much levity ; that in some I regretted your indolence, and in others your timidity. They frequently likewise gave me occasion to think, that you were not altogether so reasonable in your expectations, as is agreeable to your usual modesty. One would have imagined, indeed, you had carried a bill of exchange upon Cæsar, instead of a letter of recommendation : for you seemed to think you had nothing more to do than to receive your money and hasten home again. But money, my friend, is not so easily acquired ; and I could name some of our acquaintance who have been obliged to travel as far as Alexandria in pursuit of it, without having yet been able to obtain even their just demands*. If my inclinations were governed solely by my interest, I should certainly choose to have you here ; as nothing affords me more pleasure than your company, or more advantage than your advice and assistance. But as you sought my friendship and patronage from your earliest youth, I always thought it incumbent upon me to act with a disinterested view to your welfare ; and not only to give you my protection, but to advance, by every means in my power, both your fortunes and your dignities. In consequence of which, I dare say you have not forgotten those unsolicited offers I made you, when I had thoughts of being employed abroad. I no sooner gave up my intentions of this kind, and perceived that Cæsar treated me with great distinction and friendship, than I recommended you in the strongest and warmest terms to his favour ; perfectly well knowing the singular probity and benevolence of his heart. Accordingly he shewed, not only by his letters to me, but by his conduct towards you, the great regard he paid to my recommendation. If you have any opinion, therefore, of my judgment, or imagine that I sincerely wish you well, let me persuade you to con-

* Alluding to those who supplied Ptolemy with money when he was soliciting his affairs in Rome.

tinue with him. And notwithstanding you should meet with some things to disgust you, as business, perhaps, or other obstructions, may render him less expeditious in gratifying your views than you had reason to expect, still, however, persevere; and trust me, you will find it prove in the end both for your interest and your honour. To exhort you any farther might look like impertinence: let me only remind you, that if you lose this opportunity of improving your fortune, you will never meet again with so generous a patron, so rich a province, or so convenient a season for this purpose. And (to express myself in the style of your lawyers) Cornelius has *given his opinion* to the same effect.

I am glad for my sake, as well as yours, that you did not attend Cæsar into Britain; as it has not only saved you the fatigue of a very disagreeable expedition, but *me* likewise that of being the perpetual auditor of your wonderful exploits. Let me know in what part of the world you are likely to take up your winter quarters, and in what post you are, or expect to be, employed. Farewell.

LETTER XII.

To the same.

[A. U. 699.]

It is a considerable time since I have heard any thing from you. As for myself, if I have not written these three months, it was because, after you were separated from my brother, I neither knew where to address my letters, nor by what hand to convey them. I much wish to be informed how your affairs go on, and in what part of the world your winter quarters are likely to be fixed. I should be glad they might be with Cæsar; but, as I would not venture in his present affliction* to trouble him with a

* Cæsar about this time lost his daughter Julia, who died in childbed. She was married to Pompey, who was so passionately fond of her, that she seems, during the short time they lived together, to have taken entire possession of his whole heart, and to have turned all his ambition into the single desire of appearing amiable in her eye. The death of this young lady proved a public calamity, as it dissolved the only forcible bond of union between her father and her husband, and hastened that rupture, which ended in the destruction of the commonwealth.

letter I have written upon that subject to Balbus. In the mean while, let me intreat you not to be wanting to yourself: and for my own part, I am contented to give up so much more of your company, provided the longer you stay abroad the richer you should return. There is nothing, I think, particularly to hasten you home, now that Vacerra is dead. However, you are the best judge: and I should be glad to know what you have determined.

There is a queer fellow of your acquaintance, one Octavius or Cornelius (I do not perfectly recollect his name), who is perpetually inviting me, as a friend of yours, to sup with him. He has not yet prevailed with me to accept his compliment: however, I am obliged to the man. Farewell.

LETTER XIII.

To the same.

[A. U. 699.]

I PERCEIVE by your letter, that my friend Cæsar looks upon you as a most wonderful lawyer: and are you not happy in being thus placed in a country where you make so considerable a figure upon so small a stock? But with how much greater advantage would your noble talents have appeared had you gone into Britain? Undoubtedly there would not have been so profound a sage in the law throughout all that extensive island.

Since your epistle has provoked me to be thus jocose, I will proceed in the same strain, and tell you there was one part of it I could not read without some envy. And how indeed could it be otherwise, when I found, that, whilst much greater men were in vain attempting to get admittance to Cæsar, you were singled out from the crowd, and even summoned to an audience†? But after giving me an account of affairs which concern others, why were you silent as to your own; assured as you are that I interest myself in them

† Trebatius, it is probable, had informed Cicero, in the letter to which this is an answer, that he had been summoned by Cæsar to attend him as his assessor upon some trial; which seems to have led this author into the raileries of this and the preceding passages.

with as much zeal as if they immediately related to myself? Accordingly, as I am extremely afraid you will have no *employment* to keep you warm in your winter quarters, I would by all means advise you to lay in a sufficient quantity of fuel. Both Mucius and Manilius* have *given their opinions* to the same purpose; especially as your *regimentals*, they apprehend, will scarce be ready soon enough to secure you against the approaching cold. We hear, however, that there has been *hot work* in your part of the world; which somewhat alarmed me for your safety. But I comforted myself with considering, that you are not altogether so desperate a soldier as you are a lawyer. It is a wonderful consolation indeed to your friends, to be assured that your passions are not an overmatch for your prudence. Thus, as much as I know you love the water†, you would not venture, I find, to cross it with Cæsar: and though nothing could keep you from the combats‡ in Rome, you were much too wise, I perceive, to attend them in Britain.

But pleasantry apart: you know without my telling you, with what zeal I have recommended you to Cæsar; though perhaps you may not be apprised, that I have frequently, as well as warmly, written to him upon that subject. I had for some time indeed, intermitted my solicitations, as I would not seem to distrust his friendship and generosity: however, I thought proper in my last to remind him once more of his promise. I desire you would let me know what effect my letter has produced: and at the same time give me a full account of every thing that concerns you. For I am exceedingly anxious to be informed of the

* Mucius and Manilius, it must be supposed, were two lawyers and particular friends of Trebatius.

† The art of swimming was among the number of polite exercises in ancient Rome, and esteemed a necessary qualification for every gentleman. It was indeed one of the essential arts in military discipline, as both the soldiers and officers had frequently no other means of pursuing or retreating from the enemy. Accordingly, the *Campus Martius*, a place where the Roman youth were taught the science of arms, was situated on the banks of the Tiber; and they constantly finished their exercises of this kind, by throwing themselves into the river.

‡ Alluding to his fondness of the gladiatorial games.

prospect and situation of your affairs; as well as how long you imagine your absence is likely to continue. Be persuaded, that nothing could reconcile me to this separation, but the hopes of its proving to your advantage. In any other view I should not be so impolitic as not to insist on your return: as you would be too prudent, I dare say, to delay it. The truth is, one hour's gay or serious conversation together, is of more importance to us, than all the foes and all the friends that the whole nation of Gaul can produce. I intreat you, therefore, to send me an immediate account in what posture your affairs stand: and be assured, as honest Chremes says to his neighbour in the play§,

Whatever cares thy lab'ring bosom grieve,
My tongue shall smooth them, or my hand
relieve.

Farewell.

LETTER XIV.

To Quintus Philippus, Proconsul.

[A. U. 699.]

I CONGRATULATE your safe return from your province in the fulness of your fame, and amidst the general tranquillity of the republic. If I were in Rome, I should have waited upon you for this purpose in person, and in order likewise to make my acknowledgments to you for your favours to my friends Eg-natius and Oppius.

I am extremely sorry to hear that you have taken great offence against my friend and host Antipater. I cannot pretend to judge of the merits of the case: but I know your character too well not to be persuaded, that you are incapable of indulging an unreasonable resentment. I conjure you, however, by our long friendship, to pardon for my sake his sons, who lie entirely at your mercy. If I imagined you could not grant this favour consistently with your honour, I should be far from making the request: as my regard for your reputation is much superior to all considerations of friendship which I owe to this family. But if I am not mistaken (and indeed I very possibly may), your clemency towards them will rather add to your character, than derogate from it. If it be not too much trouble, therefore, I

In Terence's play called *The Self-tormentor*.

should be glad you would let me know how far a compliance with my request is in your power: for that it is in your inclination, I have not the least reason to doubt. Farewell.

LETTER XV.

To Lucius Valerius, the Lawyer.*

[A. U. 699.]

FOR† why should I not gratify your vanity with that honourable appellation? Since, as the times go, my friend, confidence will readily pass upon the world for skill.

I have executed the commission you sent me, and made your acknowledgments to Lentulus. But I wish you would render my offices of this kind unnecessary, by putting an end to your tedious absence. Is it not more worthy of your mighty ambition to be blended with your learned brethren at Rome, than to stand the sole great wonder of wisdom amidst a parcel of paltry Provincials? But I long to rally you in person: for which merry purpose I desire you would hasten hither as expeditiously as possible. I would by no means, however, advise you to take Apulia in the way, lest some disastrous adventure in those unlucky regions should prevent our welcoming your safe arrival. And in truth, to what purpose should you visit this your native province? For, like Ulysses when he first returned to his Ithaca, you will be much too prudent, undoubtedly, to lay claim to your noble kindred. Farewell.

LETTER XVI.

To Trebatius.

[A. U. 700.]

I WAS wondering at the long intermission

* Valerius is only known by this letter and another, wherein Cicero recommends him to Appius, as a person who lived in his family, and for whom he entertained a very singular affection. He seems to have been one of that sort of lawyers who may more properly be said to be of the profession than the science.

† The abrupt beginning of this letter has induced some of the commentators to suspect that it is not entire. But Manutius has very justly observed, that it evidently refers to the inscription: and he produces an instance of the same kind from one of the epistles to Atticus.

† Manutius imagines that Cicero means to rally the obscurity of his friend's birth.

of your letters, when my friend Pansa accounted for your indolence, by assuring me that you were turned an Epicurean. Glorious effect indeed of camp conversation! But if a metamorphosis so extraordinary has been wrought in you amidst the martial air of Samarobryva, what would have been the consequence had I sent you to the softer regions of Tarentum§? I have been in some pain for your principles, I confess, ever since your intimacy with my friend Seius. But how will you reconcile your tenets to your profession, and act for the interest of your client, now that you have adopted the maxim of doing nothing but for your own? With what grace can you insert the usual clause in your deeds of agreement: *The parties to these presents, as becomes good men and true, &c.*? For neither truth nor trust can there be in those who professedly govern themselves upon motives of absolute selfishness. I am in some pain, likewise, how you will settle the law concerning the partition of "rights in common;" as there can be nothing in common between those who make their own private gratification the sole criterion of right and wrong. Or can you think it proper to administer an oath, while you maintain that Jupiter is incapable of all resentment? In a word, what will become of the good people of Ulubræ||, who have placed themselves under your protection, if you hold the maxim of your sect, that "a wise man ought not to engage himself in public affairs?" In good earnest, I shall be extremely sorry, if it is true, that you have really deserted us. But if your conversation is nothing more than a convenient compliment to the opinions of Pansa, I will forgive your dissimulation, provided you let me know soon how your affairs go on, and in what manner I can be of any service in them. Farewell.

§ Tarentum was a city in Italy, distinguished for the softness and luxury of its inhabitants.

|| Cicero jocosely speaks of this people, as if they belonged to the most considerable town in Italy; whereas it was so mean and contemptible a place, that Horace, in order to show the power of contentment, says, that a person possessed of that excellent temper of mind, may be happy even at Ulubræ.

LETTER XVII.

To Caius Curio.

[A. U. 700.]

OUR friendship, I trust, needs not any other evidence to confirm its sincerity, than what arises from the testimony of our own hearts. I cannot, however, but consider the death of your illustrious father as depriving me of a most venerable witness to that singular affection I bear you. I regret that he had not the satisfaction of taking a last farewell of you, before he closed his eyes: it was the only circumstance wanting to render him as much superior to the rest of the world in his domestic happiness, as in his public fame*.

I sincerely wish you the happy enjoyment of your estate: and be assured, you will find in me a friend who loves and values you with the same tenderness as your father himself conceived for you. Farewell.

LETTER XVIII.

To Trebatius.

March the 24th. [A. U. 700.]

CAN you seriously suppose me so unreasonable as to be angry, because I thought you discovered too inconstant a disposition in your impatience to leave Gaul? And can you possibly believe it was for that reason I have thus long omitted writing? The truth is, I was only concerned at the uneasiness which seemed to have overcast your mind: and I forbore to write, upon no other account but as being entirely ignorant where to direct my letters. I suppose, however, that this is a plea which your loftiness will scarce condescend to admit. But tell me then, is it the weight of your purse, or the honour of being the counsellor of Cæsar, that most disposes you to be thus insufferably arrogant? Let me perish if I do not believe that thy vanity is so im-

moderate as to choose rather to share in his council than his coffers. But should he admit you into a participation of both, you will undoubtedly swell into such intolerable airs, that no mortal will be able to endure you: or none at least except myself, who am philosopher enough, you know, to endure any thing. But I was going to tell you, that as I regretted the uneasiness you formerly expressed; so I rejoice to hear, that you are better reconciled to your situation. My only fear is, that your wonderful skill in the law will little avail you in your present quarters: for I am told that the people you have to deal with,

Rest the strength of their cause on the force of their might,

And the sword is supreme arbitrator of right†.

As I know you do not choose to be concerned in *forcible entries*, and are much too peaceably disposed to be fond of making *assaults*, let me leave a piece of advice with my lawyer, and by all means recommend it to you to avoid the *Treviri*‡; for I hear they are most formidable fellows. I wish from my heart they were as harmless as their namesakes round the edges of our coin§. But I must reserve the rest of my jokes to another opportunity: in the mean time, let me desire you would send me a full account of whatever is going forward in your province. Farewell.

LETTER XIX.

To Caius Curio.

[A. U. 700.]

YOU must not impute it to any neglect in Rupa, that he has not executed your commission; as he omitted it merely in compliance with the opinion of myself and the rest of your friends. We thought it most prudent that no steps should be taken during your absence, which might preclude you from a change of measures after your return: and therefore, that it

† Ennius.

‡ The Treviri were a most warlike people bordering on Germany. They were defeated about this time by Labienus, one of Cæsar's lieutenants in Gaul.

§ The public coin was under the inspection of three officers called *Treviri monetales*: and several pieces of money are still extant in the cabinets of the curious, inscribed with the names of these magistrates.

* He was consul in the year of Rome 676, when he acted with great spirit in opposition to the attempts of Sicinius for restoring the tribunitial power, which had been much abridged by Sylla. In the following year he went governor into Macedonia, and by his military conduct in that province obtained the honour of a triumph. He distinguished himself among the friends of Cicero when he was attacked by Clodius.

would be best he should not signify your intentions of entertaining the people with public games. I may perhaps in some future letter give you my reasons at large against your executing that design: or rather, that you may not come prepared to answer my objections, I believe it will be the wisest way to reserve them till we meet. If I should not bring you over to my sentiments, I shall have the satisfaction, at least, of discharging the part of a friend: and should it happen (which I hope, however, it will not) that you should hereafter have occasion to repent of your scheme; you may then remember, that I endeavoured to dissuade you from it. But this much I will now say, that those advantages which fortune, in conjunction with your own industry and natural endowments, have put into your possession, supply a far surer method of opening your way to the highest dignities, than any ostentatious display of the most splendid spectacles. The truth of it is, exhibitions of this kind, as they are instances of wealth only, not of merit, are by no means considered as reflecting any honour on the authors of them: not to mention, that the public is quite satiated with their frequent returns. But I am fallen unawares into what I designed to have avoided, and pointing out my particular reasons against your scheme. I will wave all farther discussion, therefore, of this matter till we meet; and in the mean time inform you, that the world entertains the highest opinion of your virtues. Whatever advantages may be hoped from the most exalted patriotism united with the greatest abilities, the public, believe me, expects from you. And should you come prepared (as I am sure you ought, and I trust you will) to act up to these its glorious expectations; then, indeed, you will exhibit to your friends, and to the commonwealth in general, a spectacle of the noblest and most affecting kind*. In the mean while be assured, no man has a greater

share of my affection and esteem than yourself. Farewell.

LETTER XX.

To Trebatius.

April the 8th. [A. U. 700.]

Two or three of your letters which lately came to my hands at the same time, though of different dates, have afforded me great pleasure: as they were proofs that you have reconciled yourself, with much spirit and resolution, to the inconveniences of a military life. I had some little suspicion, I confess, of the contrary: not that I questioned your courage, but as imputing your uneasiness to the regret of our separation. Let me intreat you then to persevere in your present temper of mind: and believe me, you will derive many and considerable advantages from the service in which you are engaged. In the mean while, I shall not fail to renew my solicitations to Cæsar in your favour upon all proper occasions; and have herewith sent you a Greek letter to deliver to him for that purpose: for, in truth, you cannot be more anxious than I am that this expedition may prove to your benefit. In return, I desire you would send me a full relation of the Gallic war; for you must know, I always depend most upon the accounts of those who are *least engaged* in the action.

As I do not imagine you are altogether so considerable a person as to retain a secretary in your service, I could not but wonder you should trouble yourself with the precaution of sending me several copies of the same letter. Your parsimony, however, deserves to be applauded; as one of them, I observed, was written upon a tablet that had been used before. I cannot conceive what unhappy composition could be so very miserable as to deserve to give place upon this occasion: unless it were one of your own conveyances. I flatter myself, at least, it was not any sprightly epistle of mine that you thus disgraced, in order to scribble over it a dull one of your own. Or was it your intention to intimate affairs go so ill with you, that you could not afford any better materials? If that should be your case, you must even thank yourself for not leaving your modesty behind you.

* Curio was not of a disposition to listen to this prudent counsel of his friend: but, in opposition to all the grave advice of Cicero, he persevered in his resolution, and executed it with great magnificence. The consequence was just what Cicero foresaw and dreaded: he contracted debts which he was incapable of discharging, and then sold himself to Cæsar in order to satisfy the clamours of his creditors.

I shall recommend you in very strong terms to Balbus, when he returns into Gaul. But you must not be surprised if you should not hear from me again so soon as usual; as I shall be absent from Rome during all this month. I write this from Pomptinus, at the villa of Metrilius Philemon, where I am placed within hearing of those croaking clients whom you recommended to my protection: for a prodigious number, it seems, of your Ulubrean frogs* are assembled, in order to compliment my arrival among them. Farewell.

P. S. I have destroyed the letter I received from you by the hands of Lucius Aruntius, though it was much too innocent to deserve so severe a treatment; for it contained nothing that might not have been proclaimed before a general assembly of the people. However, it was your express desire I should destroy it; and I have complied accordingly. I will only add, that I wonder much at not having heard from you since; especially as so many extraordinary events have lately happened in your province.

LETTER XXI.

To Caius Curio.

[A. U. 700.]

PUBLIC affairs are so circumstanced, that I dare not communicate my sentiments of them in a letter. This, however, I will venture in general to say, that I have reason to congratulate you on your removal from the scene in which we are engaged. But I must add, that in whatever part of the world you might be placed, you would still (as I told you in my last) be embarked in the same common bottom with your friends here. I have another reason likewise for rejoicing in your absence, as it has placed your merit in full view of so considerable a number of the most illustrious citizens, and allies of Rome: and indeed the reputation you have acquired is universally, and without the least exception, confirmed to us on all hands. But there is one circumstance attending you, upon which I know not whether I ought to

send you my congratulations or not: I mean with respect to those high and singular advantages which the commonwealth promises itself from your return amongst us. Not that I suspect your proving unequal to the opinion which the world entertains of your virtues; but as fearing that whatever is most worthy of your care will be irrecoverably lost ere your arrival to prevent it: such, alas! is the weak and well-nigh expiring condition of your unhappy republic! But prudence, perhaps, will scarce justify me in trusting even this to a letter: for the rest, therefore, I must refer you to others. In the mean while, whatever your fears or your hopes of public affairs may be; think, my friend, incessantly think on those virtues which that generous patriot must possess, who in these evil times, and amidst such a general depravation of manners, gloriously proposes to vindicate the ancient dignity and liberties of his oppressed country. Farewell.

LETTER XXII.

To Trebatius.

[A. U. 700.]

IF it were not for the compliments you sent me by Chrysippus the freeman of Cyrus the architect, I should have imagined I no longer possessed a place in your thoughts. But surely you are become a most intolerable fine gentleman, that you could not bear the fatigue of writing to me; when you had the opportunity of doing so by a man whom, you know, I look upon as one almost of my own family. Perhaps, however, you may have forgotten the use of your pen, and so much the better, let me tell you, for your clients; as they will lose no more causes by its blunders. But if it is myself only that has escaped your remembrance; I must endeavour to refresh it by a visit, before I am worn out of your mind beyond all power of recollection. After all, is it not the apprehensions of the next summer's campaign, that has rendered your hand too unsteady to perform its office? If so you must e'en play over again the same gallant stratagem you practised last year in relation to your British expedition, and frame some heroic excuse for your absence. How-

* Cicero ludicrously gives the inhabitants of Ulubræ this appellation, in allusion to the low and marshy situation of their town.

ever, I was extremely glad to hear by Chrysippus, that you are much in Cæsar's good graces. But it would be more like a man of *equity*, methinks, as well as more agreeable to my inclinations, if you were to give me frequent notice of what concerns you, by your own hand: a satisfaction I should undoubtedly enjoy, if you had chosen to study the *laws* of good fellowship, rather than those of contention. You see I rally you, as usual, in your own way, not to say a little in mine. But to end seriously; be assured, as I greatly love you, I am no less confident than desirous of your affection in return. Farewell.

LETTER XXIII.

To Titus Fadius.

[A. U. 700.]

I KNOW not any event which has lately happened, that more sensibly affects me than your disgrace. Far therefore from being capable of giving you the consolation I wish, I greatly stand in need of the same good office myself. Nevertheless, I cannot forbear, not only to exhort, but to conjure you likewise by our friendship, to collect your whole strength of reason, in order to oppose your affliction with a firm and manly fortitude. Remember, my friend, that calamities are incident to all mankind, but particularly to us who live in these miserable and distracted times. Let it be your consolation, however, to reflect, that you have lost far less by fortune than you have acquired by merit: as there are few, under the circumstances of your birth, who ever raised themselves to the same dignities; though there are numbers of the highest quality who have sunk into the same disgrace. To say truth; so wretched is the fate which threatens our laws, our liberties, and our constitution in general, that well may he esteem himself happily dealt with, who is dismissed from such a distempered government upon the least injurious terms. As to your own case in particular, when you reflect that you are still undeprived of your estate; that you are happy in the affections of your children, your family, and your friends; and that in all probability you are only separated from them for a short interval: when you re-

flect, that among the great number of impeachments which have lately been carried on, yours is the only one that was considered as entirely groundless; that you were condemned by a majority only of one single vote, and that too universally supposed to have been given in compliance with some powerful influence—these, undoubtedly, are considerations which ought greatly to alleviate the weight of your misfortune. I will only add, that you may always depend upon finding in me that disposition both towards yourself and your family, which is agreeable to your wishes, as well as to what you have a right to expect. Farewell.

LETTER XXIV.

To Marcus Calius.

July the 6th. [A. U. 702.]

COULD you seriously then imagine, my friend, that I commissioned you to send me the idle news of the town; matches of gladiators, adjournments of causes, robberies, and the rest of those uninteresting occurrences, which no one ventures to mention to me, even when I am in the midst of them at Rome? Far other are the accounts which I expect from your hand: as I know not any man whose judgment in politics I have more reason to value. I should esteem it a misemployment of your talents, even were you to transmit to me those more important transactions that daily arise in the republic; unless they should happen to relate immediately to myself. There are other less penetrating politicians, who will send me intelligence of this sort: and I shall be abundantly supplied with it likewise by common fame. In short, it is not an account either of what has lately been transacted, or is in present agitation, that I require in your letters: I expect, as from one whose discernment is capable of looking far into futurity, your opinion of what is likely to happen. Thus, by seeing a plan, as it were, of the republic, I shall be enabled to judge what kind of structure will probably arise. Hitherto, however, I have no reason to charge you with having been negligent in communicating to me your prophetic conjectures. For the events which have lately happened in the commonwealth,

were much beyond any man's penetration: I am sure at least they were beyond mine.

I passed several days with Pompey, in conversation upon public affairs: but it is neither prudent, nor possible, to give you the particulars in a letter. In general, however, I will assure you, that he is animated with the most patriotic sentiments, and is prudently prepared, as well as resolutely determined, to act as the interest of the republic shall require. I would advise you therefore wholly to attach yourself to him: and believe me, he will rejoice to embrace you as his friend. He now indeed entertains the same opinion both with you and myself, of the good and ill intentions of the different parties in the republic.

I have spent the last ten days at Athens; from whence I am this moment setting out. During my continuance in this city, I have frequently enjoyed the company of our friend Gallus Caninius.

I recommend all my affairs to your care and protection, but particularly (what indeed is my principal concern) that my residence in the province may not be prolonged. I will not prescribe the methods you should employ for that purpose; as you are the most competent judge by what means, and by whose intervention, it may be best effected. Farewell.

LETTER XXV.

To Terentia and Tullia.

Athens, October the 18th. [A. U. 703.]

THE amiable young Cicero and myself are perfectly well, if you and my dearest Tully are so. We arrived here* on the 14th of this month, after a very tedious and disagreeable passage, occasioned by contrary winds. Acastus† met me upon my landing, with letters from Rome; having been so expeditious as to perform his journey in one-and-twenty days. In the packet which he delivered to me, I found yours, wherein you express some uneasiness lest your former letters should not have reached my hands. They have, my Terentia: and I am extremely obliged to you for the very full accounts you gave me of every thing I was concerned to know.

* Athens.

† A freed-man belonging to Cicero.

I am by no means surprised at the shortness of your last, as you had reason to expect us so soon. It is with great impatience I wish for that meeting: though I am sensible, at the same time, of the unhappy situation in which I shall find the republic. All the letters, indeed, which I received by Acastus, agree in assuring me, that there is a general tendency to a civil war: so that when I come to Rome I shall be under a necessity of declaring myself on one side or the other. However, since there is no avoiding the scene which fortune has prepared for me, I shall be the more expeditious in my journey, that I may the better deliberate on the several circumstances which must determine my choice. Let me intreat you to meet me as far on my way as your health will permit.

The legacy, which Precius has left me, is an acquisition that I receive with great concern, as I tenderly loved him, and extremely lament his death. If his estate should be put up to auction before my arrival, I beg you would recommend my interest in it to the care of Atticus: or in case his affairs should not allow him to undertake the office, that you would request the same favour of Camillus. And if this should not find you at Rome, I desire you would send proper directions thither for that purpose. As for my other affairs, I hope I shall be able to settle them myself: for I purpose to be in Italy, if the gods favour my voyage, about the 13th of November. In the mean time I conjure you, my amiable and excellent Terentia, and thou my dearest Tullia, I conjure you both by all the tender regards you bear me, to take care of your healths. Farewell.

LETTER XXVI.

To Tiro†.

November the 3d. [A. U. 703.]

I DID not imagine I should have been so little able to support your absence:

† He was a favourite slave of Cicero, who trained him up in his family, and formed him under his own immediate tuition. The probity of his manners, the elegance of his genius, and his uncommon erudition, recommended him to his master's peculiar esteem and affection.

but, indeed, it is more than I can well bear. Accordingly, notwithstanding it is of the last importance to my interest* that I should hasten to Rome, yet I cannot but severely reproach myself for having thus deserted you. However, as you seemed altogether averse from pursuing your voyage till you should re-establish your health, I approve of your scheme; and I still approve of it, if you continue in the same sentiments. Nevertheless, if, after having taken some refreshment, you should think yourself in a condition to follow me; you may do so, or not, as you shall judge proper. If you should determine in the affirmative, I have sent Mario to attend you: if not, I have ordered him to return immediately. Be well assured, there is nothing I more ardently desire than to have you with me, provided I may enjoy that pleasure without prejudice to yourself. But be assured too, that if your continuing somewhat longer at Patrae† should be thought necessary, I prefer your health to all other considerations. If you should embark immediately, you may overtake me at Leucas‡. But if you are more inclined to defer your voyage till your recovery shall be better confirmed, let me intreat you to be very careful in choosing a safe ship; and that you would neither sail at an improper season, nor without a convoy. I particularly charge you also, my dear Tiro, by all the regard you bear me, not to suffer the arrival of Mario, or any thing that I have said in this letter, in the least to influence your resolution. Believe me, whatever will be most agreeable to your health, will be most agreeable likewise to my inclinations: and, therefore, I desire you would be wholly governed by your own prudence. ¶Tis true, I am extremely desirous of your

* As Cicero was full of the hopes of obtaining a triumph, he was desirous of hastening to Rome before the dissensions between Cæsar and Pompey should be arrived at so great a height as to render it impossible for him to enjoy that honour.

† A city in Peloponnesus, which still subsists under the name of Patras. Cicero had left Tiro indisposed in this place, the day before the date of the present letter.

‡ A little Grecian island in the Ionian sea, now called Saint Maure. It was on this island that the celebrated promontory stood, from whence the tender Sappho is said to have thrown herself in a fit of amorous despair.

company, and of enjoying it as early as possible: but the same affection, which makes me wish to see you soon, makes me wish to see you well. Let your health, therefore, be your first and principal care; assuring yourself, that among all the numberless good offices I have received at your hands, I shall esteem this by far the most acceptable.

LETTER XXVII.

To the same.

Leucas, Nov. the 7th. [A. U. 703]

YOUR letter produced very different effects on my mind; as the latter part somewhat alleviated the concern which the former had occasioned. I am now convinced that it will not be safe for you to proceed on your voyage, till your health shall be entirely re-established: and I shall see you soon enough, if I see you perfectly recovered.

I find by your letter that you have a good opinion of your physician: and I am told he deserves it. However, I can by no means approve of the regimen he prescribed: for broths cannot certainly be suitable to so weak a stomach. I have written to him very fully concerning you; as also to Lyso. I have done the same likewise to my very obliging friend Curius: and have particularly requested him, if it should be agreeable to yourself, that he would remove you into his house. I am apprehensive, indeed, that Lyso will not give you proper attendance: in the first place, because carelessness is the general characteristic of all his countrymen§; and in the next, because he has returned no answer to my letter. Nevertheless, as you mention him with esteem, I leave it to you to continue with him, or not, just as you shall think proper. Let me only enjoin you, my dear Tiro, not to spare any expence that may be necessary towards your recovery. To this end, I have desired Curius to supply you with whatever money you shall require: and I think it would be proper, in order to render your physician the more careful in his attendance, to make him some present.

Numberless are the services I have

§ The Grecians.

received from you, both at home and abroad; in my public and my private transactions; in the course of my studies and the concerns of my family. But would you crown them all, let it be by your care that I may see you (as I hope I soon shall) perfectly recovered. If your health should permit, I think you cannot do better than to take the opportunity of embarking with my quæstor Mescinius; for he is a good-natured man, and seems to have conceived a friendship for you. The care of your voyage indeed is the next thing I would recommend to you, after that of your health. However, I would now by no means have you hurry yourself; as my single concern is for your recovery. Be assured, my dear Tiro, that all my friends are yours; and consequently, as your health is of the greatest importance to me as well as to yourself, there are numbers who are solicitous for its preservation. Your assiduous attendance upon me has hitherto prevented you from paying due regard to it. But now that you are wholly at leisure, I conjure you to devote all your application to that single object: and I shall judge of the affection you bear me, by your compliance with this request. Adieu, my dear Tiro, adieu! adieu! may you soon be restored to the perfect enjoyment of your health!

Lepta, together with all your other friends, salute you. Farewell.

LETTER XXVIII.

To Terentia and to Tullia.

Minturnæ, Jan. the 25th. [A. U. 704.]

IN what manner it may be proper to dispose of yourselves, during the present conjuncture, is a question which must now be decided by your own judgments as much as by mine. Should Cæsar advance to Rome without committing hostilities, you may certainly for the present at least remain there unmolested: but if this madman should give up the city to the rapine of his soldiers, I must doubt whether even Dolabella's credit and authority will be sufficient to protect you. I am under some apprehension likewise, lest whilst you are deliberating in what manner to act, you should find

yourself so surrounded with the army as to render it impossible to withdraw, though you should be ever so much inclined. The next question is (and it is a question which you yourselves are best able to determine), whether any ladies of your rank venture to continue in the city: if not, will it be consistent with your character to appear singular in that point? But be that as it will, you cannot, I think, as affairs are now situated, be more commodiously placed, than either with me or at some of our farms in this district; supposing, I mean, that I should be able to maintain my present post. I must add likewise, that a short time, 'tis to be feared, will produce a great scarcity in Rome. However, I should be glad you would take the sentiments of Atticus, or Camillus, or any other friend whom you may choose to consult upon this subject. In the mean while, let me conjure you both to keep up your spirits. The coming over of Labienus to our party has given affairs a much better aspect. And Piso having withdrawn himself from the city, is likewise another very favourable circumstance: as it is a plain indication, that he disapproves the impious measures of his son-in-law.

I intreat you, my dearest creatures, to write to me as frequently as possible, and let me know how it is with you, as well as what is going forward in Rome. My brother and nephew, together with Rufus, affectionately salute you. Farewell.

LETTER XXIX.

To the same.

Formiæ*, the 25th. [A. U. 704.]

IT well deserves consideration, whether it will be more prudent for you to continue in Rome, or to remove to some secure place within my department; and it is a consideration, my dearest creatures, in which your own judgments must assist mine. What occurs to my present thoughts is this: on the one hand, as you will probably find a safe protection in Dolabella, your residing in Rome may prove a mean of securing our house from being plundered, should the soldiers be

* A maritime city in Campania, not far from Minturnæ, the place from whence the preceding letter is dated.

suffered to commit any violences of that kind. But on the other, when I reflect, that all the worthier part of the republic have withdrawn themselves and their families from the city; I am inclined to advise you to follow their example. I must add likewise, that there are several towns in this canton of Italy under my command, which are particularly in our interest: as also, that great part of our estate lies in the same district. If therefore you should remove thither, you may not only very frequently be with me, but whenever we shall be obliged to separate, you may be safely lodged at one or other of my farms. However, I am utterly unable to determine, at present, which of these schemes is preferable; only let me intreat you to observe what steps other ladies of your rank pursue in this conjuncture: and be cautious likewise that you be not prevented from retiring, should it prove your choice. In the mean time, I hope you will maturely deliberate upon this point between yourselves; and take the opinion also of our friends. At all events, I desire you would direct Philotimus to procure a strong guard to defend our house; to which request I must add, that you would engage a proper number of regular couriers, in order to give me the satisfaction of hearing from you every day. But above all, let me conjure you both, to take care of your healths as you wish to preserve mine. Farewell.

LETTER XXX.

To Terentia.

June the 11th. [A. U. 704.]

I AM entirely free from the disorder in my stomach; which was the more painful, as I saw it occasioned both you and that dear girl, whom I love better than my life, so much uneasiness. I discovered the cause of this complaint the night after I left you, having discharged a great quantity of phlegm. This gave me so immediate a relief, that I cannot but believe I owe my cure to some heavenly interposition: to Apollo, no doubt, and Æsculapius. You will offer up your grateful tributes therefore to these restoring powers, with all the ardency of your usual devotion.

I am this moment embarked*; and have procured a ship which I hope is well able to perform her voyage. As soon as I shall have finished this letter, I propose to write to several of my friends recommending you and our dearest Tullia in the strongest terms to their protection. In the mean time, I should exhort you to keep up your spirits, if I did not know that you are both animated with a more than manly fortitude. And indeed I hope there is a fair prospect of your remaining in Italy without any inconvenience, and of my returning to the defence of the republic, in conjunction with those who are no less faithfully devoted to its interest.

After earnestly recommending to you the care of your health, let me make it my next request, that you would dispose of yourself in such of my villas as are at the greatest distance from the army. And if provisions should become scarce in Rome, I should think you will find it most convenient to remove with your servants to Arpinum†.

The amiable young Cicero most tenderly salutes you. Again and again I bid you farewell.

LETTER XXXI.

To the same‡.

[A. U. 704.]

I AM informed by the letters of my friends as well as by other accounts, that you have had a sudden attack of a fever. I entreat you, therefore, to employ the utmost care in re-establishing your health.

The early notice you gave me of Cæsar's letter was extremely agreeable to me: and let me desire you would send me the same expeditious intelligence, if any thing should hereafter occur that concerns me to know. Once more I conjure you to take care of your health. Farewell.

* In order to join Pompey in Greece; who had left Italy about three months before the date of this letter.

† A city in the country of the Volsci: a district of Italy, which now comprehends part of the Campagna di Roma, and of the Terra di Lavoro. Cicero was born in this town, which still subsists under the name of Arpino.

‡ This letter was written by Cicero in the camp at Dyrrachium.

LETTER XXXII.

To the same.*

[A. U. 704.]

I INTREAT you to take all proper measures for the recovery of your health. Let me request, likewise, that you would provide whatever may be necessary in the present conjuncture: and that you would send me frequent accounts how every thing goes on. Farewell.

LETTER XXXIII.

To the same.

July the 15th. [A. U. 704]

I HAVE seldom an opportunity of writing; and scarce any thing to say that I choose to trust in a letter. I find by your last, that you cannot meet with a purchaser for any of our farms. I beg therefore, you would consider of some other method of raising money, in order to satisfy that person, who you are sensible I am very desirous should be paid†.

I am by no means surprised that you should have received the thanks of our friend, as I dare say she had great reason to acknowledge your kindness.

If Pollux‡ is not yet set out, I desire you would exercise your authority, and force the loiterer to depart immediately. Farewell.

LETTER XXXIV.

To Terentia.

Brundisium, Nov. the 5th. [A. U. 704.]

MAY the joy you express at my safe arrival in Italy§ be never interrupted!

* This letter was probably written soon after the foregoing, and from the same place.

† This letter, as well as the two former, was written while Cicero was with Pompey in Greece. The business at which he so obscurely hints has been thought to relate to the payment of part of Tullia's portion to Dolabella.

‡ It appears by a letter to Atticus, that this person acted as a sort of steward in Cicero's family.

§ After the battle of Pharsalia Cicero would not engage himself any farther with the Pompeian party; but having endeavoured to make his peace with Cæsar by the mediation of Dolabella, he seems to have received no other answer, than an order to return immediately into Italy. And this he accordingly did a few days before the date of the present letter.

But my mind was so much discomposed by those atrocious injuries I had received, that I have taken a step, I fear, which may be attended with great difficulties. Let me then intreat your utmost assistance: though I must confess, at the same time, that I know not wherein it can avail me.

I would by no means have you think of coming hither. For the journey is both long and dangerous: and I do not see in what manner you could be of any service. Farewell.

LETTER XXXV.

To the same.

[A. U. 704.]

THE ill state of health into which Tullia is fallen, is a very severe addition to the many and great disquietudes that afflict my mind. But I need say nothing farther upon this subject, as I am sure her welfare is no less a part of your tender concern than it is of mine.

I agree both with you and her in thinking it proper that I should advance nearer to Rome: and I should have done so before now, if I had not been prevented by several difficulties, which I am not yet able to remove. But I am in expectation of a letter from Atticus, with his sentiments upon this subject: and I beg you would forward it to me by the earliest opportunity. Farewell.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the same.

[A. U. 704.]

IN addition to my other misfortunes, I have now to lament the illness both of Dolabella and Tullia. The whole frame of my mind is indeed so utterly discomposed, that I know not what to resolve, or how to act, in any of my affairs. I can only conjure you to take care of yourself and of Tullia. Farewell.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the same.

[A. U. 704.]

If any thing occurred worth communicating to you, my letters would be more

frequent and much longer. But I need not tell you the situation of my affairs; and as to the effect they have upon my mind, I leave it to Lepta and Trebatius to inform you. I have only to add my intreaties, that you would take care of your own and Tullia's health. Farewell.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Titius.

[A. U. 704.]

THERE IS NONE of your friends less capable than I am, to offer consolation to you under your present affliction; as the share I take in your loss renders me greatly in need of the same good office myself. However, as my grief does not rise to the same extreme degree as yours, I should not think I discharged the duty which my connection and friendship with you require, if I remained altogether silent at a time when you are thus overwhelmed with sorrow. I determined therefore to suggest a few reflections to you which may alleviate at least, if not entirely remove, the anguish of your heart.

There is no maxim of consolation more common, yet at the same time there is none which deserves to be more frequently in our thoughts, than that we ought to remember, "We are men;" that is, creatures who are born to be exposed to calamities of every kind: and therefore, "that it becomes us to submit to the conditions by which we hold our existence, without being too much dejected by accidents which no prudence can prevent." In a word, that we should learn by "reflecting on the misfortunes which have attended others, that there is nothing singular in those which befall ourselves." But neither these, nor other arguments to the same purpose, which are inculcated in the writings of the philosophers, seem to have so strong a claim to success, as those which may be drawn from the present unhappy situation of public affairs, and that endless series of misfortunes which is rising upon our country. They are such, indeed, that one cannot but account those to be most fortunate, who never knew what it was to be a parent; and as to those persons who are deprived of their children, in these times of general

anarchy and misrule, they have much less reason to regret their loss, than if it had happened in a more flourishing period of the commonwealth, or while yet the republic had any existence. If your tears flow, indeed, from this accident merely as it affects your own personal happiness, it may be difficult perhaps entirely to restrain them. But if your sorrow takes its rise from a more enlarged and benevolent principle; if it be for the sake of the dead themselves that you lament, it may be an easier task to assuage your grief. I shall not here insist upon an argument, which I have frequently heard maintained in speculative conversations, as well as often read likewise, in treatises that have been written upon the subject. "Death," say those philosophers, "cannot be considered as an evil; because if any consciousness remains after our dissolution, it is rather an entrance into immortality, than an extinction of life: and if none remains, there can be no misery where there is no sensibility." Not to insist, I say, upon any reasonings of this nature; let me remind you of an argument which I can urge with much more confidence. He who has made his exit from a scene where such dreadful confusion prevails, and where so many approaching calamities are in prospect, cannot possibly, it should seem, be a loser by the exchange. Let me ask, not only where honour, virtue, and probity, where true philosophy and the useful arts can now fly for refuge; but where even our liberties and our lives can be secure? For my own part, I have never once heard of the death of any youth during all this last sad year whom I have not considered as kindly delivered by the immortal gods from the miseries of these wretched times. If, therefore, you can be persuaded to think that their condition is by no means unhappy, whose loss you so tenderly deplore; it must undoubtedly prove a very considerable abatement of your present affliction. For it will then entirely arise from what you feel upon your own account; and have no relation to the persons whose death you regret. Now it would ill agree with those wise and generous maxims which have ever inspired your breast, to be too sensible of misfortunes which terminate in your own person, and affect not the happiness of those

you love. You have upon all occasions, both public and private, shewn yourself animated with the firmest fortitude : and it becomes you to act up to the character you have thus justly acquired. Time necessarily wears out the deepest impressions of sorrow : and the weakest mother, that ever lost a child, has found some period to her grief. But we should wisely anticipate that effect which a certain revolution of days will undoubtedly produce : and not wait for a remedy from time, which we may much sooner receive from reason.

If what I have said can any thing avail in lessening the weight of your affliction, I shall have obtained my wish ; if not, I shall at least have discharged the duties of that friendship and affection which, believe me, I ever have preserved, and ever shall preserve, towards you. Farewell.

LETTER XXXIX.

To Terentia.

December the 31st. [A. U. 705.]

My affairs are at present in such a situation, that I have no reason to expect a letter on your part, and have nothing to communicate to you on mine. Yet I know not how it is, I can no more forbear flattering myself that I may hear from you, than I can refrain from writing to you whenever I meet with a conveyance.

Volumnia ought to have shewn herself more zealous for your interest : and in the particular instance you mention she might have acted with greater care and caution. This, however, is but a slight grievance amongst others which I far more severely feel and lament. They have the effect upon me, indeed, which those persons undoubtedly wished, who compelled me into measures utterly opposite to my own sentiments. Farewell.

LETTER XL.

To the same.

[A. U. 706.]

TULLIA arrived here* on the 12th of this month†. It extremely affected

* Brundisium ; where Cicero was still waiting for Cæsar's arrival from Egypt.

† June.

me to see a woman of her singular and amiable virtues reduced (and reduced too by my own negligence) to a situation far other than is agreeable to her rank and filial piety‡.

I have some thoughts of sending my son, accompanied by Sallustius, with a letter to Cæsar§ ; and if I should execute this design, I will let you know when he sets out. In the mean time be careful of your health, I conjure you. Farewell.

LETTER XLI.

To the same.

June the 20th. [A. U. 706.]

I HAD determined, agreeably to what I mentioned in my former, to send my son to meet Cæsar on his return to Italy. But I have since altered my resolution, as I hear no news of his arrival. For the rest I refer you to Sicca, who will inform you what measures I think necessary to be taken, though I must add, that nothing new has occurred since I wrote last. Tullia is still with me.—Adieu, and take all possible care of your health.

LETTER XLII.

To the same.

July the 9th. [A. U. 706.]

I WROTE to Atticus (somewhat later indeed than I ought) concerning the affair you mention. When you talk with him upon that head, he will inform you of my inclinations ; and I need not be more explicit here, after having written so fully to him. Let me know as soon as possible what steps are taken in that business ; and acquaint me at the same time with every thing else which concerns me. I have only to add my request, that you would be careful of your health. Farewell.

‡ Dolabella was greatly embarrassed in his affairs ; and it seems by this passage as if he had not allowed Tullia a maintenance during his absence abroad, sufficient to support her rank and dignity.

§ In order to supplicate Cæsar's pardon for having engaged against him on the side of Pompey.

LETTER XLIII.

To the same,

July the 10th. [A. U. 706.]

IN answer to what you object concerning the divorce I mentioned in my last*, I can only say that I am perfectly ignorant what power Dolabella may at this time possess, or what ferments there may be among the populace. However, if you think there is any thing to be apprehended from his resentment, let the matter rest; and perhaps the first proposal may come from himself. Nevertheless I leave you to act as you shall judge proper; not doubting that you will take such measures in this most unfortunate affair as shall appear to be attended with the fewest unhappy consequences. Farewell.

LETTER XLIV.

To Lucius Papirius Patus.

[A. U. 706.]

Is it true, my friend, that you look upon yourself as having been guilty of a most ridiculous piece of folly in attempting to imitate the thunder, as you call it, of my eloquence? With reason, indeed, you might have thought so, had you failed in your attempt: but since you have excelled the model you had in view, the disgrace surely is on my side, not on yours. The verse, therefore, which you apply to yourself from one of Trabea's comedies, may with much more justice be turned upon me, as my own eloquence falls far short of that perfection at which I aim. But tell me, what sort of figure do my letters make; are they not written, think you, in the true familiar? They do not constantly, however, preserve one uniform manner, as this species of composition bears no resemblance to that of the oratorical kind; though indeed in judicial matters we vary our style according to the nature of the causes in which we are engaged. Those, for example, in which private interests of little moment are concerned, we treat with a suitable simplicity of diction; but where the reputation or the life of our client is in question, we rise into greater pomp and dignity of phrase. But whatever may be the sub-

ject of my letters, they still speak the language of conversation. Farewell.

LETTER XLV.

To Lucius Mescinius.

[A. U. 707.]

YOUR letter afforded me great pleasure, as it gave me an assurance (though indeed I wanted none) that you earnestly wish for my company. Believe me, I am equally desirous of yours; and in truth, when there was a much greater abundance of patriot citizens and agreeable companions who were in the number of my friends, there was no man with whom I rather chose to associate, and few whose company I liked so well. But now that death, absence, or change of disposition, has so greatly contracted this social circle, I should prefer a single day with you, to a whole life with the generality of those with whom I am at present obliged to live†. Solitude itself indeed (if solitude, alas! I were at liberty to enjoy) would be far more eligible than the conversation of those who frequent my house; one or two of them at most excepted. I seek my relief therefore (where I would advise you to look for yours) in amusements of a literary kind, and in the consciousness of having always intended well to my country. I have the satisfaction to reflect (as I dare say you will readily believe), that I never sacrificed the public good to my own private views; that if a certain person (whom for my sake, I am sure, you never loved) had not looked upon me with a jealous eye‡, both himself and every friend to liberty had been happy: that I always endeavoured that it should not be in the power of any man to disturb the public tranquillity; and in a word, that when I perceived those arms which I had ever dreaded would prove an overmatch for that patriot-coalition I had myself formed in the republic, I thought it better to accept of a safe peace upon any terms, than impotently to contend with a superior force. But I hope shortly to

† The chiefs of the Cæsarean party, with whom Cicero now found it convenient to cultivate a friendship, in order to ingratiate himself with Cæsar.

‡ Pompey, who being jealous of the popularity which Cicero had acquired during his consulship, struck in with the designs of Cæsar, and others who had formed a party against our author.

* Between Tullia and Dolabella.

talk over these and many more points with you in person. Nothing indeed detains me in Rome, but to wait the event of the war in Africa, which, I imagine, must now be soon decided. And though it seems of little importance on which side the victory shall turn, yet I think it may be of some advantage to be near my friends when the news shall arrive, in order to consult with them on the measures it may be advisable for me to pursue. Affairs are now reduced to such an unhappy situation, that though there is considerable difference, 'tis true, between the cause of the contending parties, I believe there will be very little as to the consequence of their success. However, though my spirits were too much dejected, perhaps, whilst our affairs remained in suspense, I find myself much more composed now that they are utterly desperate. Your last letter has contributed to confirm me in this disposition; as it is an instance of the magnanimity with which you support your unjust disgrace*. It is with particular satisfaction I observe that you owe this heroic calmness not only to philosophy, but to temper. For I will confess, that I imagined your mind was softened with that too delicate sensibility which we, who passed our lives in the ease and freedom of Rome, were apt in general to contract. But as we bore our prosperous days with moderation, it becomes us to bear our adverse fortune, or more properly indeed our irretrievable ruin, with fortitude. This advantage we may at least derive from our extreme calamities, that they will teach us to look upon death with contempt; which, even if we were happy, we ought to despise, as a state of total insensibility; but which, under our present afflictions, should be the object of our constant wishes. Let not any fears, then, I conjure you, by your affection for me, disturb the peace of your retirement; and be well persuaded, nothing can befall a man that deserves to raise his dread and horror, but (what I am sure ever was, and ever will be, far from you) the reproaches of a guilty heart.

I purpose to pay you a visit very soon, if nothing should happen to make it necessary for me to change my resolution: and if there should, I will immediately

* Mescinius, it is probable, was banished by Cæsar, as a partisan of Pompey, to a certain distance from Rome.

let you know. But I hope you will not, whilst you are in so weak a condition, be tempted, by your impatience of seeing me, to remove from your present situation, at least not without previously consulting me. In the mean time, continue to love me, and take care both of your health and your repose. Farewell.

LETTER XLVI.

To Varro.

[A. U. 707.]

THOUGH I have nothing to write, yet I could not suffer Caninius to pay you a visit, without taking the opportunity of conveying a letter by his hands. And now I know not what else to say, but that I propose to be with you very soon: an information, however, which I am persuaded you will be glad to receive. But will it be altogether decent to appear in so gay a scene† at a time when Rome is in such a general flame? And shall we not furnish an occasion of censure to those who do not know that we observe the same sober philosophical life, in all seasons, and in every place? Yet after all, what imports it, since the world will talk of us, in spite of our utmost caution? And indeed whilst our censurers are immersed in every kind of flagitious debauchery, it is much worth our concern, truly, what they say of our innocent relaxations. In just contempt, therefore, of these illiterate barbarians, it is my resolution to join you very speedily. I know not how it is, indeed, but it should seem that our favourite studies are attended with much greater advantages in these wretched times than formerly; whether it be that they are now our only resource; or that we were less sensible of their salutary effects when we were in too happy a state to have occasion to experience them. But this is sending owls to Athens‡, as we say; and suggesting reflections which your own mind will far better supply. All that I mean by them, however, is to

† Varro seems to have requested Cæsar to give him a meeting at Baiæ, a place much frequented by the Romans on account of its hot baths; as the agreeableness of its situation on the bay of Naples rendered it at the same time the general resort of the pleasurable world.

‡ A proverbial expression of the same import with that of "sending coals to Newcastle." It alludes to the Athenian coin, which was stamped (as Manutius observes) with the figure of an owl.

draw a letter from you in return, at the same time that I give you notice to expect me soon. Farewell.

LETTER XLVII.

To Papirius Patus.

[A. U. 707.]

YOUR letter afforded me a very agreeable instance of your friendship, in the concern it expressed lest I should be uneasy at the report which had been brought hither by Silius*. I was before indeed perfectly sensible how much you were disturbed at this circumstance, by your care in sending me duplicates of a former letter upon the same subject: and I then returned such an answer as I thought would be sufficient to abate at least, if not entirely remove, this your generous solicitude. But since I perceive, by your last letter, how much this affair still dwells upon your mind; let me assure you, my dear Patus, that I have employed every artifice (for we must now, my friend, be armed with cunning as well as prudence) to conciliate the good graces of the persons you mention; and, if I mistake not, my endeavours have not proved in vain. I received indeed so many marks of respect and esteem from those who are most in Cæsar's favour, that I cannot but flatter myself they have a true regard for me. It must be confessed at the same time, that a pretended affection is not easily discernible from a real one, unless in seasons of distress. For adversity is to friendship what fire is to gold; the only infallible test to discover the genuine from the counterfeit; in all other circumstances they both bear the same common signatures. I have one strong reason, however, to persuade me of their sincerity; as neither their situation nor mine can by any means tempt them to dissemble with me. As to that person† in whom all power is now centred, I am not sensible that I have any thing to fear from him; or nothing more, at least, than what arises from that general precarious state in which all things must stand where the fence of laws is broken down; and from its being impossible to pronounce with

assurance concerning any event, which depends wholly upon the will, not to say the caprice, of another. But this I can with confidence affirm, that I have not in any single instance given him just occasion to take offence; and in the article you point out, I have been particularly cautious. There was a time, 'tis true, when I thought it well became me, by whom Rome itself was free‡, to speak my sentiments with freedom: but now that our liberties are no more, I deem it equally agreeable to my present situation, not to say any thing that may disgust either Cæsar or his favourites. But were I to suppress every rising raillery that might pique those at whom it is directed, I must renounce, you know, all my reputation as a wit. And in good earnest, it is a character upon which I do not set so high a value, as to be unwilling to resign it if it were in my power. However, I am in no danger of suffering in Cæsar's opinion, by being represented as the author of any sarcasms to which I have no claim; for his judgment is much too penetrating ever to be deceived by any imposition of this nature. I remember your brother Servius, whom I look upon to have been one of the most learned critics that this age has produced, was so conversant in the writings of the poets, and had acquired such an excellent and judicious ear, that he could immediately distinguish the numbers of Plautus from those of any other author. Thus Cæsar, I am told, when he made his large collection of apophthegms§, constantly rejected any piece of wit that was brought to him as mine, if it happened to be spurious: a distinction which he is much more able to make at present, as his particular friends pass almost every day of their lives in my company. As our conversation generally turns upon a variety of subjects, I frequently strike out thoughts which they look upon as not altogether void, perhaps, of spirit and ingenuity. Now these little sallies of pleasantry, together with the general occurrences of Rome, are constantly transmitted to Cæsar, in pursuance of his own express di-

‡ Alluding to his services in the suppression of Catiline's conspiracy.

§ This collection was made by Cæsar when he was very young; and probably it was a performance by no means to his honour. For Augustus, into whose hands it came after his death, would not suffer it to be published.

* Silius, it should seem, had brought an account from the army, that some witticisms of Cicero had been reported to Cæsar, which had given him offence.

† Cæsar.

rection : so that if any thing of this kind be mentioned by others as coming from me, he always disregards it. You see, then, that the lines you quote with so much propriety from the tragedy of *Cenomaus**, contain a caution altogether unnecessary. For tell me, my friend, what jealousies can I possibly create? Or who will look with envy upon a man in my humble situation? But granting that I were in ever so enviable a state; yet let me observe, that it is the opinion of those philosophers, who alone seem to have understood the true nature of virtue, that a good man is answerable for nothing farther than his own innocence. Now in this respect I think myself doubly irreproachable; in the first place, by having recommended such public measures as were for the interest of the commonwealth; and in the next, that finding I was not sufficiently supported to render my counsels effectual, I did not deem it advisable to contend for them by arms against a superior strength. Most certainly, therefore, I cannot justly be accused of having failed in the duty of a good citizen. The only part then that now remains for me, is to be cautious not to expose myself, by any indiscreet word or action, to the resentment of those in power: a part which I hold likewise to be agreeable to the character of true wisdom. As to the rest; what liberties any man may take in imputing words to me which I never spoke; what credit *Cæsar* may give to such reports; and how far those who court my friendship, are really sincere; these are points for which it is by no means in my power to be answerable. My tranquillity arises, therefore, from the conscious integrity of my counsels in the times that are past, and from the moderation of my conduct in these that are present. Accordingly, I apply the simile you quote from *Accius*†, not only to Envy, but to Fortune; that weak and inconstant power, whom every wise and resolute mind should resist, with as much firmness as a rock repels the waves. Grecian story will abundantly supply examples of the greatest men, both at Athens and Syracuse, who have in some sort preserved their independency amidst the general servitude of their respective communities. May I not

hope then to be able so to comport myself under the same circumstances, as neither to give offence to our rulers, on the one hand, nor to injure the dignity of my character, on the other?

But to turn from the serious to the jocose part of your letter.—The strain of pleasantry you break into, immediately after having quoted the tragedy of *Cenomaus*, puts me in mind of the modern method of introducing at the end of those graver dramatic pieces, the buffoon humour of our low mimes, instead of the more delicate burlesque of the old *Atellan farces*‡. Why else do you talk of your paltry polypus§, and your mouldy cheese? In pure good-nature, 'tis true, I formerly submitted to sit down with you to such homely fare: but more refined company has improved me into a better taste. For *Hirtius* and *Dolabella*, let me tell you, are my preceptors in the science of the table; as in return, they are my disciples in that of the bar. But I suppose you have already heard, at least if all the town-news be transmitted to you, that they frequently declaim at my house||, and that I as often sup at theirs. You must not however hope to escape my intended visit, by pleading poverty in bar to the admission of so luxurious a guest. Whilst you were raising a fortune indeed, I bore with your parsimonious humour: but now that you are in circumstances to support the loss of half your wealth, I expect that you receive me in another manner than you would one of your compounding debtors¶. And though

‡ These *Atellan farces*, which in the earlier periods of the Roman stage were acted at the end of the more serious dramatic performances, derived their name from *Atella*, a town in Italy; from whence they were first introduced at Rome. They consisted of a more liberal and genteel kind of humour than the mimes, a species of comedy, which seems to have taken its subject from low life.

§ A sea-fish so extremely tough, that it was necessary to beat it a considerable time before it could be rendered fit for the table.

|| Cicero had lately instituted a kind of academy for eloquence in his own house; at which several of the leading young men in Rome used to meet, in order to exercise themselves in the art of oratory.

¶ This alludes to a law which *Cæsar* passed in favour of those who had contracted debts before the commencement of the civil war. By this law commissioners were appointed to take an account of the estate and effects of these debtors, which were to be assigned to their respective creditors according to their valuation before

* Written by *Accius*, a tragic poet, who flourished about the year of Rome 617.

† The poet mentioned in the preceding remark.

your finances may somewhat suffer by my visit, remember it is better they should be impaired by treating a friend, than by lending to a stranger. I do not insist, however, that you spread your table with so unbounded a profusion as to furnish out a splendid treat with the remains; I am so wonderfully moderate, as to desire nothing more than what is perfectly elegant and exquisite in its kind. I remember to have heard you describe an entertainment which was given by Phameas. Let yours be the exact copy of his: only I should be glad not to wait for it quite so long. Should you still persist, after all, to invite me, as usual, to a penurious supper, dished out by the sparing hand of maternal œconomy; even this, perhaps, I may be able to support. But I would fain see that hero bold who should dare to set before me the villainous trash you mention; or even one of your boasted polypuses, with an hue as florid as vermillioned Jove*. Take my word for it, my friend, your prudence will not suffer you to be thus adventurous. Fame, no doubt, will have proclaimed at your villa my late conversion to luxury, long before my arrival: and you will shiver at the sound of her tremendous report. Nor must you flatter yourself with the hope of abating the edge of my appetite, by your cloying sweetwines before supper: a silly custom which I have now entirely renounced: being much wiser than when I used to damp my stomach with your antepasts of olives and Lucanian sausages.—But not to run on any longer in this jocose strain; my only serious wish is, that I may be able to make you a visit. You may compose your countenance, therefore, and return to your mouldy cheese in full security: for my being your guest will occasion you, as usual, no other expence than that of heating your baths. As for all the rest, you are to look upon it as mere pleasantry.

The trouble you have given yourself about Selicius's villa†, is extremely ob-

the civil war broke out; and whatever sums had been paid for interest, were to be considered as in discharge of the principal. By this ordinance Pætus, it seems, had been a particular sufferer.

* Pliny, the naturalist, mentions a statue of Jupiter erected in the Capitol, which on certain festival days it was customary to paint with vermillion.

† In Naples.

liging; as your description of it was excessively droll. I believe therefore, from the account you give me, I shall renounce all thoughts of making that purchase: for though the country, it seems, abounds in salt, the neighbourhood, I find, is but insipid. Farewell.

LETTER XLVIII.

To Papirius Pætus.

[A. U. 707.]

YOUR letter gave me a double pleasure: for it not only diverted me extremely, but was a proof likewise that you are so well recovered as to be able to indulge your usual gaiety. I was well contented at the same time to find myself the subject of your railery; and, in truth, the repeated provocations, I had given you, were sufficient to call forth all the severity of your satire. My only regret is, that I am prevented from taking my intended journey into your part of the world; where I proposed to have made myself, I do not say your guest, but one of your family. You would have found me wonderfully changed from the man I formerly was, when you used to cram me with your cloying antepasts‡. For I now more prudently sit down to table with an appetite altogether unimpaired, and most heroically make my way through every dish that comes before me, from the egg§ that leads the van, to the roast veal that brings up the rear||. The temperate and unexpensive guest whom you were wont to applaud, is now no more. I have bidden a total farewell to all the cares of the patriot; and have joined the professed enemies of my former principles; in short, I am become an absolute Epicurean. You are by no means however to consider me as a friend to that injudicious profusion, which is

‡ These antepasts seem to have been a kind of collation preparatory to the principal entertainment. They generally consisted, it is probable, of such dishes as were provocatives to appetite: but prudent œconomists, as may be collected from the turn of Cicero's railery, sometimes contrived them in such a manner as to damp rather than improve the stomach of their guests.

§ The first dish at every Roman table was constantly eggs; which maintained their post of honour even at the most magnificent entertainments.

|| It appears by a passage which Manutius cites from Tertullian, that the Romans usually concluded their feasts with broiled or roast meat.

now the prevailing taste of our modern entertainments: on the contrary, it is that more elegant luxury I admire, which you formerly used to display when your finances were more flourishing, though your farms were not more numerous than at present. Be prepared therefore for my reception accordingly; and remember you are to entertain a man who has not only a most enormous appetite, but who has some little knowledge, let me tell you, in the science of elegant eating. You know there is a peculiar air of self-sufficiency, that generally distinguishes those who enter late into the study of any art. You will not wonder, therefore, when I take upon me to inform you, that you must banish your cakes and your sweetmeats, as articles that are now utterly discarded from all fashionable bills of fare. I am become indeed such a proficient in this science, that I frequently venture to invite to my table those refused friends of yours, the delicate Virrius and Camillus. Nay I am bolder still, and have presumed to give a supper even to Hirtius himself; though, I must own, I could not advance so far as to honour him with a peacock. To tell you the truth, my honest cook had not skill enough to imitate any other part of his splendid entertainments, except only his smoking soups.

But to give you a general sketch of my manner of life; I spend the first part of the morning in receiving the compliments of several, both of our dejected patriots and our gay victors: the latter of whom treat me with great marks of civility and esteem. As soon as that ceremony is over, I retire to my library; where I employ myself either with my books or my pen. And here I am sometimes surrounded by an audience, who look upon me as a man of most profound erudition, for no other reason, perhaps, than because I am not altogether so ignorant as themselves. The rest of my time I wholly devote to indulgences of a less intellectual kind. I have sufficiently indeed paid the tribute of sorrow to my unhappy country; the miseries whereof I have longer and more bitterly lamented, than ever tender mother bewailed the loss of her only son.

Let me desire you, as you would secure your magazine of provisions from falling into my hands, to take care of

your health; for I have most unmercifully resolved that no pretence of indisposition shall preserve your larder from my depredations. Farewell.

LETTER XLIX.

To Gallus.

[A. U. 707.]

I AM much surprised at your reproaches; as I am sure they are altogether without foundation. But were they ever so just, they would come with a very ill grace from you, who ought to have remembered those marks of distinction you received from me during my consulate. It seems, however (for so you are pleased to inform me), that Cæsar will certainly restore you. I know you are never sparing of your boasts: but I know too, that they have the ill luck never to be credited. It is in the same spirit you remind me, that you offered yourself as a candidate for the tribunitial office, merely in order to serve me*. Now to shew you how much I am in your interest, I wish you were a tribune still: as in that case you could not be at a loss for an *intercessor*†. You go on to reproach me, with not daring to speak my sentiments. In proof however of the contrary, I need only refer you to the reply I made, when you had the front to solicit my assistance.

Thus (to let you see how absolutely impotent you are, where you most affect to appear formidable) I thought proper to answer you in your own style. If you had made your remonstrances in the spirit of good manners, I should with pleasure, as I could with ease, have vindicated myself from your charge: and in truth, it is not your conduct, but your language, that I have reason to resent. I am astonished indeed that you, of all men living, should accuse me of want of freedom, who are sensible it is by my means that there is any freedom left in

* Probably during Cicero's exile.

† Cicero's witticism in this passage, turns upon the double sense of the word *intercessor*: which, besides its general meaning, has relation likewise to a particular privilege annexed to the tribunitial office. For every tribune had the liberty of interposing his negative upon the proceedings of the senate: which act was called *intercessio*, and the person who executed it was said to be the *intercessor* of the particular law, or other matter in deliberation.

the republic*. I say *you of all men living*: because, if the informations you gave me concerning Catiline's conspiracy were false; where are the services of which you remind me? If they were true, you yourself are the best judge how great those obligations are which I have conferred upon every Roman in general. Farewell.

LETTER L.

To Cæsar.

[A. U. 708.]

I VERY particularly recommend to your favour the son of our worthy and common friend Præcilius: a youth whose modest and polite behaviour, together with his singular attachment to myself, have exceedingly endeared him to me. His father likewise, as experience has now fully convinced me, was always my most sincere well-wisher. For to confess the truth, he was the first and most zealous of those who used both to rally and reproach me for not joining in your cause: especially after you had invited me by so many honourable overtures. But,

All unavailing prov'd his every art,
To shake the purpose of my stedfast heart.
Hom. Odyss. vii. 258.

For whilst the gallant chiefs of our party were on the other side perpetually exclaiming to me,

Rise thou, distinguish'd midst the sons of
fame,
And fair transmit to times unborn thy name.
Hom. Odyss. i. 502.

Too easy dupe of flattery's specious voice,
Darkling I stray'd from wisdom's better
choice.

Hom. Odyss. xxiv. 314.

And fain would they still raise my spirits, while they endeavour, insensible as I now am to the charms of glory, to rekindle that passion in my heart. With this view they are ever repeating—

O let me not inglorious sink in death,
And yield like vulgar souls my parting breath:
In some brave effort give me to expire,
That distant ages may the deed admire!
Hom. II. xxii.

But I am immoveable, as you see, by all their persuasions. Renouncing there-

fore, the pompous heroics of Homer, I turn to the just maxims of Euripides, and say with that poet,

Curse on the sage, who, impotently wise,
O'erlooks the paths where humbler prudence lies.

My old friend Præcilius is a great admirer of the sentiment in these lines; insisting, that a patriot may preserve a prudential regard to his own safety, and yet,

Above his peers the first in honour shine.
Hom. II. vi. 208.

But to return from this digression: you will greatly oblige me by extending to this young man that uncommon generosity which so peculiarly marks your character; and by suffering my recommendation to increase the number of those favours which I am persuaded you are disposed to confer upon him for the sake of his family.

I have not addressed you in the usual style of recommendatory letters, that you might see I did not intend this as an application of common form. Farewell.

LETTER LI.

To Dolabella†.

[A. U. 708.]

Oh! that the silence you so kindly regret, had been occasioned by my own death, rather than by the severe loss I have suffered‡; a loss I should be better able to support, if I had you with me. For your judicious counsels, and singular affection towards me, would greatly contribute to alleviate its weight. This good office indeed I may yet perhaps receive; for as I imagine we shall soon see you here, you will find me still so deeply affected, as to have an opportunity of affording me great assistance. Not that this affliction has so broken my spirit as to render me unmindful that I am a man, or apprehensive that I must totally sink under its pressure. But all that cheerfulness and vivacity of temper, which you once so particularly admired, has now, alas! entirely forsaken me. My fortitude and resolution, nevertheless (if these virtues were ever mine), I still retain,

* Alluding to his having suppressed Catiline's conspiracy.

† He was at this time with Cæsar in Spain.

‡ The death of his daughter Tullia.

and retain them too in the same vigour as when you left me.

As to those battles which, you tell me, you have sustained upon my account; I am far less solicitous that you should confute my detractors, than that the world should know (as it unquestionably does) that I enjoy a place in your affection: and may you still continue to render that truth conspicuous. To this request I will add another, and intreat you to excuse me for not sending you a longer letter. I shorten it, not only as imagining we shall soon meet, but because my mind is at present by no means sufficiently composed for writing. Farewell.

LETTER LII.

Servius Sulpicius to Cicero.

[A. U. 708.]

I RECEIVED the news of your daughter's death with all the concern it so justly deserves; and indeed I cannot but consider it as a misfortune in which I bear an equal share with yourself. If I had been near you when this fatal accident happened, I should not only have mingled my tears with yours, but assisted you with all the consolation in my power. I am sensible, at the same time, that offices of this kind afford at best but a wretched relief; for as none are qualified to perform them, but those who stand near to us by the ties either of blood or affection, such persons are generally too much afflicted themselves to be capable of administering comfort to others. Nevertheless, I thought proper to suggest a few reflections which occurred to me upon this occasion; not as imagining they would be new to you, but believing that in your present discomposure of mind they might possibly have escaped your attention. Tell me, then, my friend, wherefore do you indulge this excess of sorrow? Reflect, I entreat you, in what manner fortune has dealt with every one of us; that she has deprived us of what ought to be no less dear than our children, and overwhelmed in one general ruin our honours, our liberties, and our country. And after these losses, is it possible that any other should increase our tears? Is it possible that a mind long exercised in calamities so truly severe, should not become totally callous and indifferent to every event? But you will

tell me, perhaps, that your grief arises not so much on your own account as on that of Tullia. Yet surely you must often, as well as myself, have had occasion in these wretched times to reflect, that their condition by no means deserves to be regretted, whom death has gently removed from this unhappy scene. What is there, let me ask, in the present circumstances of our country, that could have rendered life greatly desirable to your daughter? What pleasing hopes, what agreeable views, what rational satisfaction could she possibly have proposed to herself from a more extended period? Was it in the prospect of conjugal happiness in the society of some distinguished youth? as if, indeed, you could have found a son-in-law amongst our present set of young men, worthy of being intrusted with the care of your daughter! Or was it in the expectation of being the joyful mother of a flourishing race, who might possess their patrimony with independence, who might gradually rise through the several dignities of the state, and exert the liberty to which they were born in the service and defence of their friends and country? But is there one amongst all these desirable privileges, of which we were not deprived before she was in a capacity of transmitting them to her descendants? Yet, after all, you may still allege, perhaps, that the loss of our children is a severe affliction; and unquestionably it would be so, if it were not a much greater to see them live to endure those indignities which their parents suffer.

I lately fell into a reflection, which as it afforded great relief to the disquietude of my own heart, it may possibly contribute likewise to assuage the anguish of yours. In my return out of Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara*, I amused myself with contemplating the circumjacent countries. Behind me lay Ægina, before me Megara; on my right I saw Piræus†, and on my left Corinth‡. These cities, once so flourishing and magnificent, now pre-

* Ægina, now called Engia, is an island situated in the gulf that runs between the Peloponnesus and Attica, to which it gives its name.—Megara was a city near the isthmus of Corinth.

† A celebrated sea-port at a small distance from Athens, now called Port Lion.

‡ A city in the Peloponnesus.

sented nothing to my view but a sad spectacle of desolation. "Alas," I said to myself, "shall such a short-lived creature as man complain, when one of his species falls either by the hand of violence, or by the common course of nature : whilst in this narrow compass so many great and glorious cities, formed for a much longer duration, thus lie extended in ruins? Remember, then, oh my heart ! the general lot to which man is born, and let that thought suppress thy unreasonable murmurs." Believe me, I found my mind greatly refreshed and comforted by these reflections. Let me advise you in the same manner to represent to yourself what numbers of our illustrious countrymen have lately been cut off at once* ; how much the strength of the Roman republic is impaired, and what dreadful devastation has gone forth throughout all its provinces ! And can you, with the impression of these greater calamities upon your mind, be so immoderately afflicted for the loss of a single individual, a poor, little, tender woman ? who, if she had not died at this time, must in a few fleeting years more have inevitably undergone that common fate to which she was born.

Reasonable, however, as these reflections are, I would call you from them a while, in order to lead your thoughts to others more peculiarly suitable to your circumstances and character. Remember then that your daughter lived as long as life was worth possessing, that is, till liberty was no more : that she lived to see you in the illustrious offices of prætor, consul, and augur ; to be married to some of the noblest youths in Rome† ; to be blessed with almost every valuable enjoyment ; and at length to expire with the republic itself. Tell me, now, what is there in this view of her fate that could give either her or yourself just reason to complain ? In fine, do not forget that you are Cicero, the wise, the philosophical Cicero, who were wont to give advice to others ; nor resemble those unskilful empirics, who, at the same time that they pretend to be furnished with remedies for other men's disorders, are altogether incapable of finding a cure for their own. On the contrary, apply to your private use those judicious pre-

cepts you have administered to the public. Time necessarily weakens the strongest impressions of sorrow ; but it would be a reproach to your character not to anticipate this its certain effect, by the force of your own good sense and judgment. If the dead retain any consciousness of what is here transacted, your daughter's affection, I am sure, was such, both to you and to all her relations, that she can by no means desire you should abandon yourself to this excess of grief. Restrain it, then, I conjure you, for her sake, and for the sake of the rest of your family and friends, who lament to see you thus afflicted. Restrain it, too, I beseech you, for the sake of your country ; that whenever the opportunity shall serve, it may reap the benefit of your counsels and assistance. In short, since such is our fortune that we must necessarily submit to the present system of public affairs, suffer it not to be suspected, that it is not so much the death of your daughter, as the fate of the republic, and the success of our victors, that you deplore.

But it would be ill manners to dwell any longer upon this subject, as I should seem to question the efficacy of your own good sense. I will only add, therefore, that as we have often seen you bear prosperity in the noblest manner, and with the highest applause, shew us likewise that you are not too sensible of adversity, but know how to support it with the same advantage to your character. In a word, let it not be said, that fortitude is the single virtue to which my friend is a stranger.

As for what concerns myself, I will send you an account of the state of this province, and of what is transacting in this part of the world, as soon as I shall hear that you are sufficiently composed to receive the information. Farewell.

LETTER LIII.

To Servius Sulpicius.

[A. U. 708.]

I JOIN with you, my dear Sulpicius, in wishing that you had been in Rome when this most severe calamity befel me. I am sensible of the advantage I should have received from your presence, and I had almost said your equal participation

* In the civil wars.

† To Piso, Crassipes, and Dolabella.

of my grief, by having found myself somewhat more composed after I had read your letter. It furnished me indeed with arguments extremely proper to sooth the anguish of affliction; and evidently flowed from a heart that sympathised with the sorrows it endeavoured to assuage. But although I could not enjoy the benefit of your own good offices in person, I had the advantage, however, of your son's, who gave me a proof, by every tender assistance that could be contributed upon so melancholy an occasion, how much he imagined that he was acting agreeably to your sentiments, when he thus discovered the affection of his own. More pleasing instances of his friendship I have frequently received, but never any that were more obliging. As to those for which I am indebted to yourself, it is not only the force of your reasonings, and the very considerable share you take in my afflictions, that have contributed to compose my mind; it is the deference, likewise, which I always pay to the authority of your sentiments. For knowing, as I perfectly do, the superior wisdom with which you are enlightened, I should be ashamed not to support my distresses in the manner you think I ought. I will acknowledge, nevertheless, that they sometimes almost entirely overcome me: and I am scarce able to resist the force of my grief when I reflect, that I am destitute of those consolations which attended others, whose examples I propose to my imitation. Thus Quintus Maximus lost a son of consular rank, and distinguished by many brave and illustrious actions; Lucius Paulus was deprived of two sons in the space of a single week; and your relation Gallus, together with Marcus Cato, had both of them the unhappiness to survive their respective sons, who were endowed with the highest abilities and virtues. Yet these unfortunate parents lived in times when the honours they derived from the republic might in some measure alleviate the weight of their domestic misfortunes. But as for myself, after having been stripped of those dignities you mention, and which I had acquired by the most laborious exertion of my abilities, I had one only consolation remaining: and of that I am now bereaved. I could no longer divert the disquietude of my

thoughts, by employing myself in the causes of my friends, or the business of the state: for I could no longer with any satisfaction appear either in the Forum or the Senate. In short, I justly considered myself as cut off from the benefit of all those alleviating occupations in which fortune and industry had qualified me to engage. But I considered, too, that this was a deprivation which I suffered in common with yourself and some others: and whilst I was endeavouring to reconcile my mind to a patient endurance of those ills, there was one to whose tender offices I could have recourse, and in the sweetness of whose conversation I could discharge all the cares and anxiety of my heart. But this last fatal stab to my peace has torn open those wounds, which seemed in some measure to have been tolerably healed. For I can now no longer lose my private sorrows in the prosperity of the commonwealth, as I was wont to dispel the uneasiness I suffered upon the public account, in the happiness I received at home. Accordingly I have equally banished myself from my house*, and from the public; as finding no relief in either, from the calamities I lament in both. It is this, therefore, that heightens my desire of seeing you here; as nothing can afford me a more effectual consolation than the renewal of our friendly intercourse: a happiness which I hope, and am informed, indeed, that I shall shortly enjoy. Among the many reasons I have for impatiently wishing your arrival, one is, that we may previously concert together our scheme of conduct in the present conjuncture; which, however, must now be entirely accommodated to another's will. This person†, 'tis true, is a man of great abilities and generosity; and one, if I mistake not, who is by no means my enemy; and I am sure he is extremely your friend. Nevertheless it requires much consideration, I do not say in what manner we shall act with respect to public affairs, but by what methods we may best obtain his permission to retire from them. Farewell.

* Cicero, upon the death of his daughter, retired from his own house, to one belonging to Atticus, near Rome, from which, perhaps, this letter was written.

† Cæsar.

LETTER LIV.

To Lucius Lucceius.

[A. U. 708.]

ALL the letters I have received from you, upon the subject of my late misfortune, were extremely acceptable to me, as instances of the highest affection and good sense. But the great advantage I have derived from them, principally results from the animating contempt with which you look down upon human affairs, and that exemplary fortitude which arms you against all the various assaults of fortune. I esteem it the most glorious privilege of philosophy to be thus superior to external accidents, and to depend for happiness on ourselves alone: a sentiment, which, although it was too deeply planted in my heart to be totally eradicated, has been somewhat weakened, I confess, by the violence of those repeated storms to which I have been lately exposed. But you have endeavoured, and with great success indeed, to restore it to all its usual strength and vigour. I cannot, therefore, either too often or too strongly assure you, that nothing could give me a higher satisfaction than your letter. But powerful as the various arguments of consolation are which you have collected for my use, and elegantly as you have enforced them; I must acknowledge, that nothing proved more effectual than that firmness of mind which I remarked in your letters, and which I should esteem as the utmost reproach not to imitate. But if I imitate I must necessarily excel my guide and instructor in this lesson of fortitude: for I am altogether unsupported by the same hopes which I find you entertain, that public affairs will improve. Those illustrations indeed which you draw from the gladiatorial combats, together with the whole tendency of your reasoning in general, all concur in forbidding me to despair of the commonwealth. It would be nothing extraordinary, therefore, if you should be more composed than myself, whilst you are in possession of these pleasing hopes: the only wonder is, how you can possibly entertain any. For say, my friend, what is there of our constitution that is not utterly subverted? Look round the republic and tell me (you who so well understand the nature of our government) what part of it remains un-

broken or unimpaired? Most unquestionably there is not one, as I would prove in detail, if I imagined my own discernment was superior to yours, or were capable (notwithstanding all your powerful admonitions and precepts) to dwell upon so melancholy a subject without being extremely affected. But I will bear my domestic misfortunes in the manner you assure me that I ought; and as to those of the public, I shall support them, perhaps, with greater equanimity than even my friend. For (to repeat it again) you are not, it seems, without some sort of hopes; whereas for myself, I have absolutely none, and shall, therefore, in pursuance of your advice, preserve my spirits even in the midst of despair. The pleasing recollection of those actions you recollect to my remembrance, and which, indeed, I performed chiefly by your encouragement and recommendation, will greatly contribute to this end. To say the truth, I have done every thing for the service of my country that I ought, and more than could have been expected from the courage and counsels of any man. You will pardon me, I hope, for speaking in this advantageous manner of my own conduct: but as you advise me to alleviate my present uneasiness by a retrospect of my past actions, I will confess, that in thus commemorating them I find great consolation.

I shall punctually observe your admonitions, by calling off my mind as much as possible from every thing that may disturb its peace, and fixing it on those speculations which are at once an ornament to prosperity and the support of adversity. For this purpose I shall endeavour to spend as much of my time with you, as our health and years will mutually permit: and if we cannot meet so often as I am sure we both wish, we shall always at least seem present to each other by a sympathy of hearts, and an union in the same philosophical contemplations. Farewell.

LETTER LV.

Lucceius to Cicero.

[A. U. 708.]

I SHALL rejoice to hear that you are well. As to my own health, it is much as usual; or rather, I think, somewhat worse.

I have frequently called at your door, and am much surprised to find that you have not been in Rome since Cæsar left it. What is it that so strongly draws you from hence? If any of your usual engagements of the literary kind renders you thus enamoured of solitude, I am so far from condemning your retirement that I think of it with pleasure. There is no sort of life indeed that can be more agreeable, not only in times so disturbed as the present, but even in those of the most desirable calm and serenity; especially to a mind like yours, which may have occasion for repose from its public labours, and which is always capable of producing something that will afford both pleasure to others and honour to yourself. But if you have withdrawn from the world, in order to give a free vent to those tears which you so immoderately indulged when you were here, I shall lament indeed your grief; but (if you will allow me to speak the truth) I never can excuse it. For tell me, my friend, is it possible that a man of your uncommon discernment should not perceive what is obvious to all mankind? Is it possible you can be ignorant that your perpetual complaints can profit nothing, and only serve to increase those disquietudes which your good sense requires you to subdue? But if arguments cannot prevail, intreaties perhaps may. Let me conjure you, then, by all the regard you bear me, to dispel this gloom that hangs upon your heart; to return to that society and to those occupations which were either common to us both, or peculiar to yourself. But though I would fain dissuade you from continuing your present way of life, yet I would by no means suffer my zeal to be troublesome. In the difficulty therefore of steering between these two inclinations, I will only add my request, that you would either comply with my advice, or excuse me for offering it. Farewell.

LETTER LVI.

To *Lucius Luccæius*.

[A. U. 708.]

EVERY part of your last letter glowed with that warmth of friendship, which, though it was by no means new to me, I could not but observe with peculiar satisfaction; I would say *pleasure*, if that were not a word to which I have now for ever

bidden adieu; not merely, however, for the cause you suspect, and for which, under the gentlest and most affectionate terms, you in fact very severely reproach me; but because all that ought in reason to assuage the anguish of so deep a wound, is absolutely no more. For whither shall I fly for consolation? Is it to the bosom of my friends? But tell me (for we have generally shared the same common amities together), how few of that number are remaining? how few that have not perished by the sword, or that are not become strangely insensible? You will say, perhaps, that I might seek my relief in your society; and there indeed I would willingly seek it. The same habits and studies, a long intercourse of friendship—in short, is there any sort of bond, any single circumstance of connection wanting to unite us together? Why then are we such strangers to one another? For my own part, I know not: but this I know, that we have hitherto seldom met, I do not say in Rome, where the Forum usually brings every body together*, but when we were near neighbours at Tusculum and Puteolæ.

I know not by what ill fate it has happened, that at an age when I might expect to flourish in the greatest credit and dignity, I should find myself in so wretched a situation as to be ashamed that I am still in being. Despoiled indeed of every honour and every comfort that adorned my public life, or smoothed my private; what is it that can now afford me any refuge? My books, I imagine you will tell me; and to these indeed I very assiduously apply. For to what else can I possibly have recourse? Yet even these seem to exclude me from that peaceful port which I fain would reach, and reproach me, as it were, for prolonging that life which only increases my sorrows with my years. Can you wonder, then, that I absent myself from Rome, where there is nothing under my own roof to afford me any satisfaction, and where I abhor both public men and public measures, both the Forum and the Senate? For this reason it is that I wear away my days in a total application to literary pur-

* The Forum was a place of general resort for the whole city. It was here that the lawyers pleaded their causes, that the poets recited their works, and that funeral orations were spoken in honour of the dead. It was here, in short, every thing was going forward that could engage the active or amuse the idle.

suits ; not indeed as entertaining so vain a hope, that I may find in them a complete cure for my misfortunes, but in order to obtain at least some little respite from their bitter remembrance.

If those dangers, with which we were daily menaced, had not formerly prevented both you and myself from reflecting with that coolness we ought, we should never have been thus separated. Had that proved to have been the case, we should both of us have spared ourselves much uneasiness ; as I should not have indulged so many groundless fears for your health, nor you for the consequences of my grief. Let us repair then this unlucky mistake as well as we may : and as nothing can be more suitable to both of us than the company of each other, I purpose to be with you in a few days. Farewell.

LETTER LVII.

To Tiro.

[A. U. 708.]

BELIEVE me, my dear Tiro, I am greatly anxious for your health : however, if you persevere in the same cautious regimen which you have hitherto observed, you will soon, I trust, be well. As to my library, I beg you would put the books in order, and take a catalogue of them, when your physician shall give you his consent : for it is by his directions you must now be governed. With respect to the garden, I leave you to adjust matters as you shall judge proper.

I think you might come to Rome on the first of next month, in order to see the gladiatorial combats, and return the following day : but let this be entirely as is most agreeable to your own inclinations. In the mean time, if you have any affection for me, take care of your health. Farewell.

LETTER LVIII.

To the same.

[A. U. 708.]

Why should you not direct your letters to me with the familiar superscription which one friend generally uses to another ? However, if you are unwilling to hazard the envy which this privilege may draw upon you, be it as you think proper ; though for my own part it is

a maxim which I have generally pursued with respect to myself, to treat envy with the utmost disregard.

I rejoice that you found so much benefit by your sudorific ; and should the air of Tusculum be attended with the same happy effect, how infinitely will it increase my fondness for that favourite scene ! If you love me then (and if you do not, you are undoubtedly the most successful of all dissemblers), consecrate your whole time to the care of your health ; which hitherto indeed your assiduous attendance upon myself has but too much prevented. You well know the rules which it is necessary you should observe for this purpose ; and I need not tell you that your diet should be light, and your exercises moderate : that you should keep your body open, and your mind amused. Be it your care, in short, to return to me perfectly recovered : and I shall ever afterwards not only love you, but Tusculum so much the more ardently.

I wish you could prevail with your neighbour to take my garden, as it will be the most effectual means of vexing that rascal Helico. This fellow, although he paid a thousand sesterces* for the rent of a piece of cold barren ground, that had not so much as a wall or a shed upon it, or was supplied with a single drop of water, has yet the assurance to laugh at the price I require for mine ; notwithstanding all the money I have laid out upon the improvements. But let it be your business to spirit the man into our terms ; as it shall be mine to make the same artful attack upon Otho.

Let me know what you have done with respect to the fountain ; though possibly this wet season may now have oversupplied it with water. If the weather should prove fair, I will send the dial, together with the books you desire. But how happened it that you took none with you ? Was it that you were employed in some poetical composition upon the model of your admired Sophocles ? If so, I hope you will soon oblige the world with your performance.

Ligurius, Cæsar's great favourite, is dead. He was a very worthy man, and much my friend. Let me know when I may expect you : in the mean time be careful of your health. Farewell.

* About 8*l.* of our money.

BOOK THE FIRST.

ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL.

SECTION II.

FROM THE LETTERS OF PLINY THE CONSUL*, TO SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS,
AS TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM MELMOTH, ESQ.

LETTER I.

To Caninius Rufus.

How stands Comum†, that favourite scene of yours and mine? What becomes of the pleasant villa, the vernal portico, the shady planetree walk, the crystal canal so agreeably winding along its

* Pliny was born in the reign of Nero, about the eight hundred and fifteenth year of Rome, and the sixty-second of the Christian æra. As to the time of his death antiquity has given us no information; but it is conjectured that he died either a little before, or soon after, that excellent prince, his admired Trajan; that is, about the year of Christ one hundred and sixteen.

The elegance of this author's manner adds force to the most interesting, at the same time that it enlivens the most common subjects. But the polite and spirited turn of these letters is by no means their principal recommendation: they receive a much higher value, as they exhibit one of the most amiable and animating characters in all antiquity. Pliny's whole life seems to have been employed in the exercise of every generous and social affection. To forward modest merit, to encourage ingenious talents, to vindicate oppressed innocence, are some of the glorious purposes to which he devoted his power, his fortune, and his abilities. But how does he rise in our esteem and admiration, when we see him exercising (with a grace that discovers his humanity as well as his politeness) the noblest acts both of public and private munificence, not so much from the abundance of his wealth, as from the wisdom of his economy!

† The city where Pliny was born: it still subsists, and is now called Como, situated upon the lake Larius, or Lago di Como, in the duchy of Milan.

flowery banks, together with the charming lake‡ below, that serves at once the purposes of use and beauty? What have you to tell me of the firm yet soft gestatio§, the sunny bath, the public saloon, the private dining-room, and all the elegant apartments for repose both at noon and night||? Do these enjoy my friend, and divide his time with pleasing vicissitude? Or do the affairs of the world, as usual, call you frequently out from this agreeable retreat? If the scene of your enjoyment lies wholly there, you are happy; if not, you are under the common error of mankind. But leave, my friend (for certainly it is high time), the sordid pursuits of life to others, and devote yourself, in this calm and undisturbed recess, entirely to pleasures of the studious kind. Let these employ your idle as well as serious hours; let them be at once your business and your amusement, the subjects of your waking and even sleeping thoughts: produce something that shall be really and for ever your own. All your other possessions will pass on from one master to another: *this* alone, when once it is

‡ The lake Larius, upon the banks of which this villa was situated.

§ A piece of ground set apart for the purpose of exercise, either on horseback, or in their vehicles; it was generally contiguous to their gardens, and laid out in the form of a circus.

|| It was customary among the Romans to sleep in the middle of the day, and they had apartments for that purpose distinct from their bed-chambers.

yours, will for ever be so. As I well know the temper and genius of him to whom I am addressing myself, I must exhort you to think as well of your abilities as they deserve: do justice to those excellent talents you possess, and the world, believe me, will certainly do so too. Farewell.

LETTER II.

To Pompeia Celerina.

You might perceive, by my last short letter, I had no occasion of yours to inform me of the various conveniences you enjoy at your several villas. The elegant accommodations which are to be found at Narnia*, Otriculum†, Carsola‡, Perugia§, particularly the pretty bath at Narnia, I am extremely well acquainted with. The truth is, I have a property in every thing which belongs to you; and I know of no other difference between your house and my own, than that I am more carefully attended in the former than the latter. You may, perhaps, have occasion to make the same observation in your turn, whenever you shall give me your company here, which I wish for, not only that you may partake of *mine* with the same ease and freedom that I do of *yours*, but to awaken the industry of my domestics, who are grown something careless in their attendance upon me. A long course of mild treatment is apt to wear out the impressions of awe in servants; whereas new faces quicken their diligence, as they are generally more inclined to please their master by attention to his guest, than to himself. Farewell.

LETTER III.

To Cornelius Tacitus.

CERTAINLY you will laugh (and laugh you may) when I tell you that your old acquaintance is turned sportsman, and has taken three noble boars. What! (methinks I hear you say with astonishment) Pliny!—*Even he.* However, I indulged at the same time my beloved

* Now called Narni, a city in Umbria, in the duchy of Spoleto.

† Otricoli, in the same duchy.

‡ Carsola, in the same duchy.

§ Perugia, in Tuscany.

inactivity, and while I sat at my nets, you would have found me, not with my spear, but my pen by my side. I mused and wrote, being resolved, if I returned with my hands empty, at least to come home with my papers full. Believe me, this manner of studying is not to be despised: you cannot conceive how greatly exercise contributes to enliven the imagination. There is, besides, something in the solemnity of the venerable woods with which one is surrounded, together with that awful silence|| which is observed on these occasions, that strongly inclines the mind to meditation. For the future, therefore, let me advise you, whenever you hunt, to take along with you your pen and paper, as well as your basket and bottle; for be assured you will find Minerva as fond of traversing the hills as Diana. Farewell.

LETTER IV.

To Minutius Fundanus.

WHEN one considers how the time passes at Rome, one cannot but be surprised that take any single day, and it either is, or at least seems to be, spent reasonably enough; and yet upon casting up the whole sum, the amount will appear quite otherwise. Ask any one how he has been employed to-day? he will tell you, perhaps, "I have been at the ceremony of taking up the *manly robe*¶; this friend invited me to a wedding; that desired me to attend the hearing of his cause: one begged me to be witness to his will; another called me to consultation." These are offices which seem, while one is engaged in them, extremely necessary; and yet when, in the quiet of some retirement, we look back upon the many hours thus employed, we cannot but condemn them as solemn

|| By the circumstance of silence here mentioned, as well as by the whole air of this letter, it is plain the hunting here recommended was of a very different kind from what is practised amongst us. It is probable the wild boars were allured into their nets by some kind of prey, with which they were baited, while the sportsman watched at a distance in silence and concealment.

¶ The Roman youths at the age of seventeen changed their habit, and took up the *toga virilis*, or manly gown, upon which occasion they were conducted by the friends of the family with great ceremony either into the Forum or Capitol, and there invested with this new robe.

impertinences. At such a season one is apt to reflect, How much of my life has been lost in trifles! At least it is a reflection which frequently comes across me at Laurentum, after I have been employing myself in my studies, or even in the necessary care of the animal machine (for the body must be repaired and supported, if we would preserve the mind in all its vigour). In that peaceful retreat I neither hear nor speak any thing of which I have occasion to repent. I suffer none to repeat to me the whispers of malice; nor do I censure any man, unless myself, when I am dissatisfied with my compositions. There I live undisturbed by rumour, and free from the anxious solitudes of hope or fear, conversing only with myself and my books. True and genuine life! Pleasing and honourable repose! More, perhaps, to be desired than the noblest employments! Thou solemn sea and solitary shore, best and most retired scene for contemplation, with how many noble thoughts have you inspired me! Snatch, then, my friend, as I have, the first occasion of leaving the noisy town, with all its very empty pursuits, and devote your days to study, or even resign them to ease; for, as my ingenious friend Attilius pleasantly said, "It is better to do nothing, than to be doing of nothing." Farewell.

LETTER V.

To Atrius Clemens.

IF ever polite literature flourished at Rome, it certainly does now, of which I could give you many eminent instances; I will content myself, however, with naming only Euphrates the philosopher. I first made acquaintance with this excellent person in my youth, when I served in the army in Syria. I had an opportunity of conversing with him familiarly, and took some pains to gain his affection; though that indeed was nothing difficult, for he is exceedingly open to access, and full of that humanity which he professes. I should think myself extremely happy if I had as much answered the expectations he at that time conceived of me, as he exceeds every thing that I had imagined of him. But perhaps I admire his excellencies more

now than I did then, because I understand them better; if I can with truth say I understand them yet. For as none but those who are skilled in painting, statuary, or the plastic art, can form a right judgment of any performance in those sciences; so a man must himself have made great advances in learning, before he is capable of forming a just notion of the learned. However, as far as I am qualified to determine, Euphrates is possessed of so many shining talents, that he cannot fail to strike the most injudicious observer. He reasons with much force, penetration, and elegance, and frequently launches out into all the sublime and luxuriant eloquence of Plato. His style is rich and flowing, and at the same time so wonderfully sweet, that with a pleasing violence he forces the attention of the most unwilling hearer. His outward appearance is agreeable to all the rest; he has a good shape, a comely aspect, long hair, and a large white beard; circumstances which, though they may probably be thought trifling and accidental, contribute however to gain him much reverence. There is no affected negligence in his habit; his countenance is grave, but not austere; and his approach commands respect without creating awe. Distinguished as he is by the sanctity of his manners, he is no less so by his polite and affable address. He points his eloquence against the vices, not the persons of mankind, and without chastising reclaims the wanderer. His exhortations so captivate your attention, that you hang as it were upon his lips; and even after the heart is convinced, the ear still wishes to listen to the harmonious reasoner. His family consists of three children (two of which are sons), whom he educates with the utmost care. His father-in-law, Pompeius Julianus, as he greatly distinguished himself in every other part of his life, so particularly in this, that though he was himself of the highest rank in his province, yet among many considerable competitors for his daughter, he preferred Euphrates, as first in merit, though not in dignity. But to dwell any longer upon the virtues of a man, whose conversation I am so unfortunate as not to have leisure to enjoy, what would it avail but to increase my uneasiness that I cannot enjoy it? My time is wholly taken up in the execution of a very honourable,

indeed, but very troublesome employment; in hearing of causes, answering petitions, passing accounts, and writing of letters: but letters, alas! where genius has no share. I sometimes complain to Euphrates (for I have leisure at least for that) of these unpleasing occupations. He endeavours to comfort me, by affirming, that to be engaged in the service of the public, to hear and determine causes, to explain the laws, and administer justice, is a part, and the noblest part too, of philosophy, as it is reducing to practice what her professors teach in speculation. It may be so: but that it is as agreeable as to spend whole days in attending to his useful conversation—even this rhetoric will never be able to convince me. I cannot therefore but strongly recommend it to you, who have leisure, the next time you come to Rome (and you will come, I dare say, so much the sooner) to take the benefit of his elegant and refined instructions. I am not, you see, in the number of those who envy others the happiness they cannot share themselves: on the contrary, it is a very sensible pleasure to me, when I find my friends in possession of an enjoyment from which I have the misfortune to be excluded. Farewell.

LETTER VI.

To Calpurnius Tiro.

I HAVE suffered a most sensible loss; if that word is strong enough to express the misfortune which has deprived me of so excellent a man. Cornelius Rufus is dead! and dead too by his own act! a circumstance of great aggravation to my affliction; as that sort of death which we cannot impute either to the course of nature, or the hand of Providence, is of all others the most to be lamented. It affords some consolation in the loss of those friends whom disease snatches from us, that they fall by the general fate of mankind: but those, who destroy themselves, leave us under the inconsolable reflection that they had it in their power to have lived longer. 'Tis true, Cornelius had many inducements to be fond of life; a blameless conscience, high reputation, and great dignity, together with all the tender endearments of a wife, a daughter, a grandson, and sisters; and amidst these considerable pledges of hap-

pineness, many and faithful friends. Still it must be owned he had the highest reason (which to a wise man will always have the force of the strongest obligation) to determine him in this resolution. He had long laboured under so tedious and painful a distemper, that even these blessings, great and valuable as they are, could not balance the evils he suffered. In his thirty-third year (as I have frequently heard him say) he was seized with the gout in his feet. This he received from his father; for diseases, as well as possessions, are sometimes transmitted by a kind of inheritance. A life of abstinence and virtue had something broke the force of this distemper while he had strength and youth to struggle with it; as a manly courage supported him under the increasing weight of it in his old age. I remember in the reign of Domitian, I made him a visit at his villa near Rome, where I found him under the most incredible and undeserved tortures; for the gout was now not only in his feet, but had spread itself over his whole body. As soon as I entered his chamber, his servants withdrew: for it was his constant rule never to suffer them to be present when any very intimate friend was with him: he even carried it so far as to dismiss his wife upon such occasions, though worthy of the highest confidence. Looking round about him, Do you know (says he) why I endure life under these cruel agonies? It is with the hope that I may outlive, at least for one day, that villain*. And O! ye Gods, had you given me strength, as you have given me resolution, I would infallibly have that pleasure! Heaven heard his prayer, and having survived that tyrant, and lived to see liberty restored, he broke through those great, but however now less forcible attachments to the world, since he could leave it in possession of security and freedom. His distemper increased; and as it now grew too violent to admit of any relief from temperance, he resolutely determined to put an end to its uninterrupted attacks by an effort of heroism. He had refused all sustenance for four days, when his wife Hispulla sent to me our common friend Geminius, with the melancholy news that he was resolved to die; and that she and her

* Domitian.

daughter having in vain joined in their most tender persuasions to divert him from his purpose, the only hope they had now left was in my endeavours to reconcile him to life. I ran to his house with the utmost precipitation. As I approached it, I met a second messenger from Hispulla, who informed me there was nothing to be hoped for, even from me, as he now seemed more inflexible than ever in his resolution. What confirmed their fears was an expression he made use of to his physician, who pressed him to take some nourishment: "Tis resolved," said he: an expression which, as it raised my admiration of his greatness of soul, so it does my grief for the loss of him. I am every moment reflecting what a valuable friend, what an excellent man I am deprived of. That he was arrived to his sixty-seventh year, which is an age even the strongest seldom exceed, I well know: that he is delivered from a life of continual pain; that he left his family and (what he loved even more) his country in a flourishing state; all this I know. Still I cannot forbear to weep for him, as if he had been in the prime and vigour of his days; and I weep (shall I own my weakness?) upon a private account. For I have lost, oh! my friend, I have lost the witness, the guide, and the director of my life! And to confess to you what I did to Calvisius in the first transport of my grief, I sadly fear, now that I am no longer under his eye, I shall not keep so strict a guard over my conduct. Speak comfort to me, therefore, I intreat you; not by telling me that he was old, that he was infirm; all this I know; but by supplying me with some arguments that are uncommon and resistless, that neither the commerce of the world, nor the precepts of the philosophers, can teach me. For all that I have heard, and all that I have read, occur to me of themselves; but all these are by far too weak to support me under so heavy an affliction. Farewell.

LETTER VII.

To Junius Mauricus.

You desire me to look out a husband for your niece; and it is with justice you enjoin me that office. You were a witness to the esteem and affection I bore

that great man her father, and with what noble instructions he formed my youth, and taught me to deserve those praises he was pleased to bestow upon me. You could not give me then a more important, or more agreeable commission; nor could I be employed in an office of higher honour, than of choosing a young man worthy of continuing the family of Rusticus Arulenus! a choice I should be long in determining if I were not acquainted with Minutius Æmilianus, who seems formed for our purpose. While he loves me with that warmth of affection which is usual between young men of equal years (as indeed I have the advance of him but by a very few), he reveres me at the same time with all the deference due to age; and is as desirous to model himself by my instructions, as I was by those of yourself and your brother. He is a native of Brixia*, one of those provinces in Italy which still retains much of the frugal simplicity and purity of ancient manners. He is son to Minutius Macrinus, whose humble desires were satisfied with being first in rank of the Equestrian order; for though he was nominated by Vespasian in the number of those whom that prince dignified with the Prætorian honours, yet with a determined greatness of mind, he rather preferred an elegant repose, to the ambitious, shall I call them, or honourable pursuits in which we in public life are engaged. His grandmother on the mother's side is Serrana Procula, of Padua: you are no stranger to the manners of that place; yet Serrana is looked upon, even among these reserved people, as an exemplary instance of strict virtue. Acilius, his uncle, is a man of singular gravity, wisdom, and integrity. In a word, you will find nothing throughout his family unworthy of yours. Minutius himself has great vivacity, as well as application, joined at the same time with a most amiable and becoming modesty. He has already, with much credit, passed through the offices of Quæstor, Tribune, and Prætor, so that you will be spared the trouble of soliciting for him those honourable employments. He has a genteel and ruddy countenance, with a certain noble mien that speaks the man of

† A town in the territories of Venice, now called Brescia.

distinction; advantages, I think, by no means to be slighted, and which I look upon as the proper tribute to virgin innocence. I am doubtful whether I should add, that his father is very rich. When I consider the character of those who require a husband of my choosing, I know it is unnecessary to mention wealth; but when I reflect upon the prevailing manners of the age, and even the laws of Rome, which rank a man according to his possessions, it certainly claims some notice; and indeed in establishments of this nature, where children and many other circumstances are to be considered, it is an article that well deserves to be taken into the account. You will be inclined perhaps to suspect, that affection has had too great a share in the character I have been drawing, and that I have heightened it beyond the truth. But I will stake all my credit, you will find every thing far beyond what I have represented. I confess, indeed, I love Minutius (as he justly deserves) with all the warmth of the most ardent affection; but for that very reason I would not ascribe more to his merit, than I know it will support. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

To Septitius Clarus.

How happened it, my friend, that you did not keep your engagement the other night to sup with me? But take notice, justice is to be had, and I expect you shall fully reimburse me the expense I was at to treat you; which, let me tell you, was no small sum. I had prepared, you must know, a lettuce a-piece, three snails*, two eggs, and a barley cake, with some sweet wine and snow†; the

* A dish of snails was very common at a Roman table. The manner used to fatten them is related by some very grave authors of antiquity; and Pliny the Elder mentions one Fulvius Hirpinus, who had studied that art with so much success, that the shells of some of his snails would contain about ten quarts. In some parts of Switzerland this food is still in high repute.

† The Romans used snow not only to cool their liquors, but their stomachs, after having inflamed themselves with high eating. This custom still prevails in Italy, especially in Naples, where they drink very few liquors, not so much as water, that have not lain in fresco, and everybody from the highest to the lowest makes use of it: insomuch that a scarcity of

snow most certainly I shall charge to your account, as a rarity that will not keep. Besides all these curious dishes, there were olives of Andalusia, gourds, shalots, and a hundred other dainties equally sumptuous. You should likewise have been entertained either with an interlude, the rehearsal of a poem, or a piece of music, as you liked best; or (such was my liberality) with all three. But the luxurious delicacies‡ and Spanish dancers of a certain — I know not who, were it seems more to your taste. However, I shall have my revenge of you, depend upon it—in what manner, shall be at present a secret. In good truth it was not kind thus to mortify your friend, I had almost said yourself;—and upon second thoughts I do say so: for how agreeably should we have spent the evening, in laughing, trifling; and deep speculation! You may sup, I confess, at many places more splendidly; but you can be treated nowhere, believe me, with more unconstrained cheerfulness, simplicity, and freedom: only make the experiment: and if you do not ever afterwards prefer my table to any other, never favour me with your company again. Farewell.

LETTER IX.

To Erucius.

I CONCEIVED an affection for my friend Pompeius Saturnius, and admired his genius, even long before I knew the extensive variety of his talents: but he has now taken full and unreserved possession of my whole heart. I have heard him in the unpremeditated, as well as studied speech, plead with no less warmth and energy, than grace and eloquence. He abounds with just reflections; his periods are graceful and majestic; his words harmonious, and stamped with

snow would raise a mutiny at Naples, as much as a dearth of corn or provisions in another country.

‡ In the original the dishes are specified, viz. oysters, the matrices of sows, and a certain sea shell-fish, prickly like a hedge-hog, called echinus, all in the highest estimation among the Roman admirers of table luxury; as appears by numberless passages in the classic writers. Our own country had the honour to furnish them with oysters, which they fetched from Sandwich: Montanus, mentioned by Juvenal, was so well skilled in the science of good eating, that he could tell by the first taste whether they came from thence or not.

the authority of genuine antiquity. These united qualities infinitely delight you, not only when you are carried along, if I may so say, with the resistless flow of his charming and emphatical elocution; but when considered distinct and apart from the advantage. I am persuaded you will be of this opinion when you peruse his orations, and will not hesitate to place him in the same rank with the ancients, whom he so happily imitates. But you will view him with still higher pleasure in the character of an historian, where his style is at once concise and clear, smooth and sublime; and the same energy of expression, though with more closeness, runs through his harangues, which so eminently distinguishes and adorns his pleadings. But these are not all his excellencies; he has composed several poetical pieces in the manner of my favourite Calvus and Catullus. What strokes of wit, what sweetness of numbers, what pointed satire, and what touches of the tender passion appear in his verses! in the midst of which he sometimes designedly falls into an agreeable negligence in his metre, in imitation too of those admired poets. He read to me, the other day, some letters which he assured me were wrote by his wife. I fancied I was hearing Plautus or Terence in prose. If they were that lady's (as he positively affirms), or his own (which he absolutely denies), either way he deserves equal applause; whether for writing so politely himself, or for having so highly improved and refined the genius of his wife, whom he married young and uninstructed. His works are never out of my hands; and whether I sit down to write any thing myself, or to revise what I have already wrote, or am in a disposition to amuse myself, I constantly take up this agreeable author; and as often as I do so, he is still new. Let me strongly recommend him to the same degree of intimacy with you; nor be it any prejudice to his merit that he is a cotemporary writer. Had he flourished in some distant age, not only his works, but the very pictures and statues of him, would have been passionately inquired after; and shall we then, from a sort of satiety, and merely because he is present among us, suffer his talents to languish and fade away unhonoured and unadmired? It is surely a very perverse and envious dis-

position, to look with indifference upon a man worthy of the highest approbation for no other reason but because we have it in our power to see him and to converse with him, and not only to give him our applause, but to receive him into our friendship. Farewell.

LETTER X.

To Cornelius Tacitus.

I HAVE frequent debates with a learned and judicious person of my acquaintance, who admires nothing so much in the eloquence of the bar as conciseness. I agree with him, where the cause will admit of this manner, it may be properly enough pursued; but to insist, that to omit what is material to be mentioned, or only slightly to touch upon those points which should be strongly inculcated, and urged home to the minds of the audience, is in effect to desert the cause one has undertaken. In many cases a copious manner of expression gives strength and weight to our ideas, which frequently make impressions upon the mind, as iron does upon the solid bodies, rather by repeated strokes than a single blow. In answer to this he usually has recourse to authorities; and produces Lysias among the Grecians, and Cato and the two Gracchi among our own countrymen, as instances in favour of the concise style. In return, I name Demosthenes, Æschynes, Hæperides, and many others, in opposition to Lysias; while I confront Cato and the Gracchi, with Cæsar, Pollio, Cælius, and above all Cicero, whose longest oration is generally esteemed the best. It is in good compositions, as in every thing else that is valuable; the more there is of them, the better. You may observe in statues, basso-relievos, pictures, and the bodies of men, and even in animals and trees, that nothing is more graceful than magnitude, if it is accompanied with proportion. The same holds true in pleading; and even in books, a large volume carries something of beauty and authority in its very size. My antagonist, who is extremely dexterous at evading an argument, eludes all this, and much more which I usually urge to the same purpose, by insisting that those very persons, upon

whose works I found my opinion, made considerable additions to their orations when they published them. This I deny: and appeal to the harangues of numberless orators; particularly to those of Cicero for Murena and Varenus, where he seems to have given us little more than the general charge. Whence it appears, that many things which he enlarged upon at the time he delivered those orations, were retrenched when he gave them to the public. The same excellent orator informs us, that, agreeably to the ancient custom which allowed only one counsel on a side, Cluentius had no other advocate but himself: and tells us farther, that he employed four whole days in defence of Cornelius: by which it plainly appears that those orations which, when delivered at their full length, had necessarily taken up so much time at the bar, were greatly altered and abridged when he afterwards comprised them in a single volume, though I must confess, indeed, a large one. But it is objected, there is a great difference between good pleading and just composition. This opinion, I acknowledge, has some favourers, and it may be true; nevertheless I am persuaded (though I may perhaps be mistaken), that, as it is possible a pleading may be well received by the audience, which has not merit enough to recommend it to the reader, so a good oration cannot be a bad pleading; for the oration upon paper is, in truth, the original and model of the speech that is to be pronounced. It is for this reason we find in many of the best orations extant, numberless expressions which have the air of unpremeditated discourse; and this even where we are sure they were never spoken at all: as for instance in the following passage from the oration against Verres,—"A certain mechanic—what's his name? Oh, I am obliged to you for helping me to it; yes, I mean Polyclethus." It cannot then be denied, that the nearer approach a speaker makes to the rules of just composition, the more perfect he will be in his art; always supposing, however, that he has the necessary indulgence in point of time; for if he be abridged of that, no imputation can justly be fixed upon the advocate, though certainly a very great one is chargeable upon the judge. The sense of the laws is, I am sure, on my

side, which are by no means sparing of the orator's time; it is not brevity, but an enlarged scope, a full attention to every thing material, which they recommend. And how is it possible for an advocate to acquit himself of that duty, unless in the most insignificant causes, if he affects to be concise? Let me add what experience, that unerring guide, has taught me: it has frequently been my province to act both as an advocate and as a judge, as I have often assisted as an assessor*, where I have ever found the judgments of mankind are to be influenced by different applications; and that the slightest circumstances often produce the most important consequences. There is so vast a variety in the dispositions and understandings of men, that they seldom agree in their opinions about any one point in debate before them; or if they do, it is generally from the movement of different passions. Besides, as every man naturally favours his own discoveries, and when he hears an argument made use of which had before occurred to himself, will certainly embrace it as extremely convincing, the orator therefore should so adapt himself to his audience as to throw out something to every one of them, that he may receive and approve as his own peculiar thought. I remember when Regulus and I were concerned together in a cause, he said to me, You seem to think it necessary to insist upon every point; whereas I always take aim at my adversary's throat, and there I closely press him. ('Tis true, he tenaciously holds whatever part he has once fixed upon: but the misfortune is, he is extremely apt to mistake the right place.) I answered, It might possibly happen that what he took for what he called the throat, was in reality some other part. As for me, said I, who do not pretend to direct my aim with so much certainty, I attack every part, and push at every opening; in short, to use a vulgar proverb, I leave no stone unturned. As in agriculture, it is not my vineyards, or my woods alone, but my fields also that I cultivate; and (to pursue the allusion) as I do not content myself with sowing those fields with

* The Prætor was assisted by ten assessors, five of whom were senators, and the rest knights. With these he was obliged to consult before he pronounced sentence.

only one kind of grain, but employ several different sorts: so in my pleadings at the bar, I spread at large a variety of matter like so many different seeds, in order to reap from thence whatever may happen to hit: for the disposition of your judges is as precarious and as little to be ascertained, as that of soils and seasons. I remember the comic writer Eupolis mentions it in praise of that excellent orator Pericles, that

On his lips persuasion hung,
And powerful reason rul'd his tongue:
Thus he alone could boast the art,
To charm at once and sting the heart.

But could Pericles, without the richest variety of expression, and merely by force of the concise or the rapid style, or both together (for they are extremely different), have exerted that charm and that sting of which the poet here speaks? To delight and to persuade requires time and a great compass of language; and to leave a sting in the minds of his audience is an effect not to be expected from an orator who slightly pushes, but from him, and him only, who thrusts home and deep. Another comic poet*, speaking of the same orator, says,

His mighty words like Jove's own thunder roll;
Greece hears and trembles to her inmost soul.

But it is not the concise and the reserved, it is the copious, the majestic, and the sublime orator, who with the blaze and thunder of his eloquence hurries impetuously along, and bears down all before him. There is a just mean, I own, in every thing; but he equally deviates from that true mark, who falls short of it, as he who goes beyond it; he who confines himself in too narrow a compass, as he who launches out with too great a latitude. Hence it is as common to hear our orators condemned for being too barren, as too luxuriant; for not reaching, as well as for overflowing the bounds of their subject. Both, no doubt, are equally distant from the proper medium; but with this difference, however, that in the one the fault arises from an excess, in the other from a deficiency; an error which if it be not a sign of a more correct, yet is certainly of a more exalted genius. When I say this, I would not be under-

stood to approve that everlasting talker† mentioned in Homer, but that other‡ described in the following lines:

Frequent and soft as falls the winter snow,
Thus from his lips the copious periods flow.

Not but I extremely admire him too§, of whom the poet says,

Few were his words, but wonderfully strong.

Yet if I were to choose, I should clearly give the preference to the style resembling winter snow, that is, to the full and diffusive; in short, to that pomp of eloquence which seems all heavenly and divine. But ('tis urged) the harangue of a more moderate length is most generally admired. It is so, I confess; but by whom? By the indolent only; and to fix the standard by the laziness and false delicacy of these would surely be the highest absurdity. Were you to consult persons of this cast, they would tell you, not only that it is best to say little, but that it is best to say nothing.—Thus, my friend, I have laid before you my sentiments upon this subject, which I shall readily abandon, if I find they are not agreeable to yours. But if you should dissent from me, I beg you would communicate to me your reasons. For though I ought to yield in this case to your more enlightened judgment, yet in a point of such consequence, I had rather receive my conviction from the force of argument than authority. If you should be of my opinion in this matter, a line or two from you in return, intimating your concurrence, will be sufficient to confirm me in the justness of my sentiments. On the contrary, if you think me mistaken, I beg you would give me your objections at large. Yet has it not, think you, something of the air of bribery, to ask only a short letter if you agree with me; but enjoin you the trouble of a very long one, if you are of a contrary opinion? Farewell.

LETTER XI.

To Catilius Severus.

I AM at present detained in Rome (and have been so a considerable time) under the most alarming apprehensions. Titus

† Thersites, *Iliad* ii. v. 212.

‡ Ulysses, *Iliad* iii. v. 222.

§ Menelaus, *ibid.*

* Aristophanes.

Aristo, whom I infinitely love and esteem, is fallen into a dangerous and obstinate illness, which deeply affects me. Virtue, knowledge, and good sense, shine out with so superior a lustre in this excellent man, that learning herself and every valuable endowment seems involved in the danger of his single person. How consummate is his knowledge, both in the political and civil laws of his country! How thoroughly conversant is he in every branch of history and antiquity! There is no article of science, in short, you would wish to be informed of, in which he is not skilled. As for my own part, whenever I would acquaint myself with any abstruse point of literature, I have recourse to him, as to one who supplies me with its most hidden treasures. What an amiable sincerity, what a noble dignity is there in his conversation! How humble, yet how graceful is his diffidence! Though he conceives at once every point in debate, yet he is as slow to decide as he is quick to apprehend, calmly and deliberately weighing every opposite reason that is offered, and tracing it, with a most judicious penetration, from its source through all its remotest consequences. His diet is frugal, his dress plain; and whenever I enter his chamber, and view him upon his couch, I consider the scene before me as a true image of ancient simplicity, to which his illustrious mind reflects the noblest ornament. He places no part of his happiness in ostentation, but refers the whole of it to conscience; and seeks the reward of his virtue, not in the clamorous applauses of the world, but in the silent satisfaction which results from having acted well. In short, you will not easily find his equal even among our philosophers by profession. He frequents not the places of public disputations*, nor idly amuses himself and others with vain and endless controversies. His nobler talents are exerted to more useful purposes; in the scenes of civil and active life. Many has he assisted with his interest, still more with his advice. But though he dedicates his time to the affairs of the world, he regulates his conduct by the precepts of the philosophers; and in the practice of temper-

ance, piety, justice, and fortitude, he has no superior. It is astonishing with what patience he bears his illness; how he struggles with pain, endures thirst, and quietly submits to the troublesome regimen necessary in a raging fever. He lately called me, and a few more of his particular friends, to his bedside, and begged we would ask his physicians what turn they apprehended his distemper would take; that if they pronounced it incurable, he might voluntarily put an end to his life; but if there were hopes of a recovery, however tedious and difficult, he might wait the event with patience; for so much, he thought, was due to the tears and intreaties of his wife and daughter, and to the affectionate intercession of his friends, as not voluntarily to abandon our hopes, if in truth they were not entirely desperate. A resolution this, in my estimation, truly heroic, and worthy of the highest applause. Instances are frequent enough in the world, of rushing into the arms of death without reflection, and by a sort of blind impulse: but calmly and deliberately to weigh the reasons for life or death, and to be determined in our choice as either side of the scale prevails, is the mark of an uncommon and great mind†. We have had the satisfaction of the opinion of his physicians in his favour; and may Heaven give success to their art, and free me from this restless anxiety! If that should happily be the event, I shall immediately return to my favourite Laurentinum, or, in other words, to my books and studious retirement. At present, so much of my time and thought I employ in attendance upon my friend, and in my apprehensions for him, that I have neither leisure nor inclination for subjects of literature. Thus have I informed you of my fears, my wishes, and my intentions. Communicate to me, in your turn, but in a gayer style, an account not only of what you are and have been doing, but even of your future designs. It will be a very sensible consolation to me in this perplexity of mind, to be assured that yours is easy. Farewell.

* The philosophers used to hold their disputations in the Gymnasia and Porticos, being places of most public resort for walking, &c.

† The general lawfulness of self-murder was a doctrine by no means universally received in the ancient Pagan world; many of the most considerable names, both Greek and Roman, having expressly declared against that practice.

LETTER XII.

To Bëbius.

My friend and guest Tranquillus has an inclination to purchase a small farm, of which, as I am informed, an acquaintance of yours intends to dispose. I beg you would endeavour he may have it upon reasonable terms; a circumstance which will add to his satisfaction in obtaining it. A dear bargain is always disagreeable, particularly as it is a reflection upon the purchaser's judgment. There are several circumstances attending this little villa, which (supposing my friend has no objection to the price) are extremely suitable to his taste: the convenient distance from Rome, the goodness of the roads, the smallness of the building, and the very few acres of land around it, which is just enough to amuse but not employ him. To a man of the studious turn that Tranquillus is, it is sufficient if he has but a small spot to relieve the mind and divert the eye, where he may saunter round his grounds, traverse his single walk, grow familiar with his two or three vines, and count his little plantations. I mention these particulars, to let you see how much he will be obliged to me, as I shall to you, if you can help him to the purchase of this little *box*, so agreeable to his taste, upon terms of which he shall have no occasion to repent.

LETTER XIII.

To Voconius Romanus.

ROME has not for many years beheld a more magnificent and solemn spectacle, than was lately exhibited in the public funeral of that great man, the illustrious and fortunate * Virginius Rufus. He lived thirty years in the full enjoyment of the highest reputation: and as he had the satisfaction to see his

* The ancients seem to have considered fortune as a mark of merit in the person who was thus distinguished. Cicero (to borrow the observation of an excellent writer) recommended Pompey to the Romans for their general upon three accounts, as he was a man of courage, conduct, and *good fortune*; and not only Sylla the Dictator, but several of the Roman emperors, as is still, to be seen upon their medals, among other titles, gave themselves that of *felix*, or fortunate.

actions celebrated by poets and recorded by historians, he seems even to have anticipated his fame with posterity. He was thrice raised to the dignity of consul, that he who refused to be the first of princes † might at least be the highest of subjects. As he escaped the resentment of those emperors to whom his virtues had given umbrage, and even rendered him odious, and ended his days when this best of princes, this friend of mankind ‡, was in quiet possession of the empire, it seems as if Providence had purposely preserved him to these times, that he might receive the honour of a public funeral. He arrived in full tranquillity, and universally revered, to the eighty-fourth year of his age; having enjoyed an uninterrupted state of health during his whole life, excepting only a paralytic disorder in his hands, which, however, was attended with no pain. His last sickness, indeed, was severe and tedious; but even the accident that occasioned it added to his glory. As he was preparing to return his public acknowledgments to the emperor, who had raised him to the consulship, a large volume, which he accidentally received at that time, too weighty for a feeble old man, slipped out of

† At the time of the general defection from Nero, Virginius was at the head of a very powerful army in Germany, which had pressed him, and even attempted to force him, to accept the title of emperor. But he constantly refused it, adding, that he would not even suffer it to be given to any person but whom the senate should elect. With this army he marched against Vindex, who had put himself at the head of 100,000 Gauls. Having come up with him, he gave him battle, in which Vindex was slain, and his forces entirely defeated. After this victory, when Nero's death was known in the army, the soldiers renewed their application to Virginius to accept the imperial dignity; and though one of the tribunes rushed into his tent, and threatened that he should either *receive the empire, or his sword through his body*, he resolutely persisted in his former sentiments. But as soon as the news of Nero's death was confirmed, and that the senate had declared for Galba, he prevailed with the army, though with much difficulty, to do so too.

‡ The justness of this glorious title, *the friend of mankind*, here given to Nerva, is confirmed by the concurrent testimony of all the historians of these times. That excellent emperor's short reign seems indeed to have been one uninterrupted series of generous and benevolent actions; and he used to say himself, he had the satisfaction of being conscious he had not committed a single act that could give just offence to any man.

his hands. In hastily endeavouring to recover it, the pavement being extremely slippery, he fell down and broke his thigh bone; which fracture, as it was unskillfully set at first, and having besides the infirmities of age to contend with, could never be brought to unite again. The funeral obsequies paid to the memory of this great man, have done honour to the emperor, to the present age, and even to eloquence herself. The consul Cornelius Tacitus pronounced his funeral oration; for, to crown the series of his felicities, he received the applause of the most eloquent of orators. He died full of years and of glory, as illustrious by the honours he refused as by those he acquired. Still, however, he will be missed and lamented by the world, as the bright model of a better age; especially by myself, who not only admired him as a patriot, but loved him as a friend. We were not only natives of the same province, and of neighbouring towns, but our estates were contiguous. Besides these accidental connections with him, he was also left guardian to me; and indeed he treated me with the affection of a parent. Whenever I offered myself a candidate for any employment, he constantly supported me with his interest; as in all the honours I have obtained, though he had long since renounced all offices of this nature, he would kindly give up the repose of his retirement, and come in person to solicit for me. At the time when it is customary for the priests to nominate such as they judge worthy to be received into their sacred office*, he constantly proposed me. Even in his last sickness I received a distinguishing mark of his affection; being apprehensive he might be named one of the five commissioners appointed by the senate to reduce the public expenses, he fixed upon me, young as I am, to carry his excuses, in preference to so many other friends of superior age and dignity; and in a very obliging manner assured me, that had he

a son of his own, he would nevertheless have employed me in that office. Have I not sufficient cause then to lament his death, as if it were immature, and thus pour out the fulness of my grief in the bosom of my friend? if indeed it be reasonable to grieve upon this occasion, or to call that event *death*, which, to such a man, is rather to be looked upon as the period of his mortality than the end of his life. He lives, my friend, and will continue to live for ever; and his fame will spread farther, and be more celebrated by mankind, now that he is removed from their sight.

I had many other things to write to you, but my mind is so entirely taken up with this subject that I cannot call it off to any other. Virginius is constantly in my thoughts; the vain but lively impressions of him are continually before my eyes, and I am for ever fondly imagining that I hear him, converse with him, and embrace him. There are, perhaps, and possibly hereafter will be, some few who may rival him in virtue; but not one, I am persuaded, that will ever equal him in glory. Farewell.

LETTER XIV.

To Paulinus.

WHETHER I have reason for my rage, is not quite so clear; however, wondrous angry I am. But love, you know, will sometimes be irrational; as it is often ungovernable, and ever jealous. The occasion of this my formidable wrath is great, you must allow, were it but just: yet taking it for granted, that there is as much truth as weight in it, I am most vehemently enraged at your long silence. Would you soften my resentment? Let your letters for the future be very frequent, and very long. I shall excuse you upon no other terms; and as absence from Rome, or engagement in business, is a plea I can by no means admit; so that of ill health, the gods, I hope, will not suffer you to allege. As for myself, I am enjoying at my villa the alternate pleasures of study and indolence; those happy privileges of retired leisure! Farewell.

* Namely, of Augurs. This college, as regulated by Sylla, consisted of fifteen, who were all persons of the first distinction in Rome: it was a priesthood for life, of a character indelible, which no crime or forfeiture could efface; it was necessary that every candidate should be nominated to the people by two Augurs, who gave a solemn testimony upon oath of his dignity and fitness for that office.

LETTER XV.

To Nepos.

WE had received very advantageous accounts of Iseus, before his arrival here; but he is superior to all that was reported of him. He possesses the utmost facility and copiousness of expression, and his unpremeditated discourses have all the propriety and elegance of the most studied and elaborate composition. He speaks the Greek language, or rather the genuine Attic. His exordiums are polite, easy, and harmonious; and, when occasion requires, solemn and majestic. He gives his audience liberty to call for any question they please, and sometimes even to name what side of it he shall take; when immediately he rises up in all the graceful attitude of an orator, and enters at once into his subject with surprising fluency. His reflections are solid, and clothed in the choicest expressions, which present themselves to him with the utmost facility. The ease and strength of his most unprepared discourses plainly discover he has been very conversant in the best authors, and much accustomed to compose himself. He opens his subject with great propriety; his style is clear, his reasoning strong, his inferences just, and his figures graceful and sublime. In a word, he at once instructs, entertains, and affects you, and each in so high a degree, that you are at a loss to determine in which of those talents he most excels. His arguments are formed in all the strength and conciseness of the strictest logic; a point not very easy to attain even in studied compositions. His memory is so extraordinary, that he will repeat what he has before spoken extempore without losing a single word. This wonderful faculty he has acquired by great application and practice; for his whole time is so devoted to subjects of this nature, that he thinks and talks of nothing else. Though he is above sixty-three years of age, he still chooses to continue in this profession; than which, it must be owned, none abounds with men of more worth, simplicity, and integrity. We, who are conversant in the real contentions of the bar, unavoidably contract a certain artfulness, however contrary to our natural tempers: but the business of the schools, as it turns merely upon matters

of imagination, affords an employment as innocent as it is agreeable; and it must, methinks, be particularly so to those who are advanced in years; as nothing can be more desirable at that period of life, than to enjoy those reasonable pleasures, which are the most pleasing entertainments of our youth. I look therefore upon Iseus, not only as the most eloquent, but the most happy of men; as I shall esteem you the most insensible if you appear to slight his acquaintance. Let me prevail with you then to come to Rome, if not upon my account, or any other, at least for the pleasure of hearing this extraordinary person. Do you remember to have read of a certain inhabitant of the city of Cadiz, who was so struck with the illustrious character of Livy, that he travelled to Rome on purpose to see that great genius; and, as soon as he had satisfied his curiosity, returned home again? A man must have a very inelegant, illiterate, and indolent (I had almost said a very mean) turn of mind, not to think whatever relates to a science so entertaining, so noble, and so polite, worthy of his curiosity. You will tell me, perhaps, you have authors in your own study equally eloquent. I allow it; and those authors you may turn over at any time, but you cannot always have an opportunity of hearing Iseus. Besides, we are infinitely more affected with what we hear, than what we read. There is something in the voice, the countenance, the habit*, and the gesture of the speaker, that concur in fixing an impression upon the mind, and gives this method of instruction greatly the advantage of any thing one can receive from books; this at least was the opinion of Æschines, who having read to the Rhodians a speech of Demosthenes, which they loudly applauded: "But how," said he, "would you have been affected, had you heard the orator himself thundering out this sublime harangue?" Æschines, if we may believe Demosthenes, had great dignity of utterance; yet, you see, he could not but confess it would have been a considerable advantage to the oration, if it had been pronounced by the author himself, in all the pomp and energy of his powerful elocution. What I aim at by

* The ancients thought every thing that concerned an orator worthy of their attention, even to his very dress.

this, is, to persuade you to come and hear Iseus; and let me again intreat you to do so, if for no other reason, at least that you may have the pleasure to say, you once heard him. Farewell.

LETTER XVI.

To Caninius.

How is my friend employed? Is it in the pleasures of study, or in those of the field? Or does he unite both together, as he well may, on the banks of our favourite Larius*? The fish in that noble lake will supply you with sport of that kind; as the woods that surround it will afford you game; while the solemnity of that sequestered scene will at the same time dispose your mind to contemplation. Whether you are entertained with all, or any of these agreeable amusements, far be it that I should say I envy you; but, I must confess, I greatly regret that I cannot partake of them too; a happiness I as earnestly long for, as a man in a fever does for drink to allay his thirst, or baths and fountains to assuage his heat. Shall I never break loose (if I may not disentangle myself) from these ties that thus closely withhold me? I doubt, indeed, never; for new affairs are daily increasing, while yet the former remain unfinished; such an endless train of business rises upon me, and rivets my chains still faster! Farewell.

LETTER XVII.

To Octavius.

You are certainly a most obstinate, I had almost said a most cruel man, thus to withhold from the world such excellent compositions! How long do you intend to deny your friends the pleasure of your verses, and yourself the glory of them? Suffer them, I entreat you, to come abroad, and to be admired; as admired they undoubtedly will be, wherever the Roman language is understood. The public, believe me, has long and ear-

nestly expected them, and you ought not to disappoint or delay it any longer. Some few poems of yours have already, contrary to your inclination, indeed, broke their prison, and escaped to light: these if you do not collect together, some person or other will claim the agreeable wanderers as their own. Remember, my friend, the mortality of human nature, and that there is nothing so likely to preserve your name as a monument of this kind; all others are as frail and perishable as the men whose memory they pretend to perpetuate. You will say, I suppose, as usual, let my friends see to that. May you find many whose care, fidelity, and learning, render them able and willing to undertake so considerable a charge! But surely it is not altogether prudent to expect from others, what a man will not do for himself. However, as to publishing of them, I will press you no farther; be that when you shall think proper. But let me, at least, prevail with you to recite them, that you may be more disposed to send them abroad; and may receive the satisfaction of that applause, which I will venture, upon very just grounds, to assure you of beforehand. I please myself with imagining the crowd, the admiration, the applause, and even the silence that will attend you: for the silence of an audience, when it proceeds from an earnest desire of hearing, is as agreeable to me as the loudest approbation. Do not then, by this unreasonable reserve, defraud your labours any longer of a fruit so certain and so desirable; if you should, the world, I fear, will be apt to charge you with carelessness and indolence, or, perhaps, with timidity. Farewell.

LETTER XVIII.

To Priscus.

As I know you gladly embrace every opportunity of obliging me, so there is no man to whom I had rather lay myself under an obligation. I apply to you, therefore, preferably to any body else, for a favour which I am extremely desirous of obtaining. You, who are at the head of a very considerable army, have many opportunities of exercising your generosity; and the length of time you have enjoyed that post, must have enabled

* Now called Lago di Como, in the Milanese. Comum, the place where Pliny was born, and near to which Caninius had a country house, was situated upon the border of this lake.

you to provide for all your own friends. I hope you will now turn your eyes upon some of mine: they are but a few indeed for whom I shall solicit you; though your generous disposition, I know, would be better pleased if the number were greater. But it would ill become me to trouble you with recommending more than one or two; at present I will only mention Voconius Romanus. His father was of great distinction among the Roman knights; and his father-in-law, or, as I might more properly call him, his second father (for his affectionate treatment of Voconius entitles him to that appellation), was still more conspicuous. His mother was one of the most considerable ladies of Upper Spain: you know what character the people of that province bear, and how remarkable they are for the strictness of their manners. As for himself, he has been lately admitted into the sacred order of priesthood. Our friendship began with our studies, and we were early united in the closest intimacy. We lived together under the same roof in town and country, as he shared with me my most serious and my gayest hours: and where, indeed, could I have found a more faithful friend, or more agreeable companion? In his conversation, and even in his very voice and countenance, there is the most amiable sweetness; as at the bar he discovers an elevated genius, an easy and harmonious elocution, a clear and penetrating apprehension. He has so happy a turn for epistolary writing*, that were you to read his letters, you would imagine they had been dictated by the Muses themselves. I love him with a more than common affection, and I know he returns it with equal ardour. Even in the earlier part of our lives, I warmly embraced every opportunity of doing him all the good offices which then lay in my power; as I have lately obtained for him of the emperor†, the privilege granted to those who have three children‡. A favour

which though Cæsar very rarely bestows, and always with great caution, yet he conferred, at my request, in such a manner as to give it the air and grace of being his own choice. The best way of shewing that I think he deserves the obligations he has already received from me, is, by adding more to them, especially as he always accepts my favours with so much gratitude as to merit farther. Thus I have given you a faithful account of Romanus, and informed you how thoroughly I have experienced his worth, and how much I love him. Let me intreat you to honour him with your patronage in a way suitable to the generosity of your heart and the eminence of your station. But above all, admit him into a share of your affection; for though you were to confer upon him the utmost you have in your power to bestow, you can give him nothing so valuable as your friendship. That you may see he is worthy of it, even to the highest degree of intimacy, I have sent you this short sketch of his character. I should continue my intercessions in his behalf, but that I am sure you do not love to be pressed, and I have already repeated them in every line of this letter; for to shew a just reason for what one asks, is to intercede in the strongest manner. Farewell.

LETTER XIX.

To Valerianus.

How goes on your old estate at Marsi §? and how do you approve of your new purchase? Has it as many beauties in your eye now, as before you bought it? That would be extraordinary indeed! for an object in possession seldom retains the same charms it had in pursuit. As for myself, the estate left me by my mother uses me but ill; however, I value it for her sake, and am besides grown a good deal insensible by a long course of bad treatment. Thus, frequent complaints generally end at last in being ashamed of complaining any more.

peror sometimes extended to those who were not legally entitled to it.

§ One of the ancient divisions of Italy, comprehending part of what is now called the *Father Abruzzo*.

* It appears from this and some other passages in these letters, that the art of epistolary writing was esteemed by the Romans in the number of liberal and polite accomplishments.

† Trajan.

‡ By a law passed A. U. 762, it was enacted, that whatever citizen of Rome had three children, should be excused from all troublesome offices where he lived. This privilege the em-

LETTER XX.

To Mauricus.

WHAT can be more agreeable to me than the office you have enjoined me, of choosing a proper tutor for your nephews? It gives me an opportunity of revisiting the scene of my education, and of turning back again to the most pleasing part of my life. I take my seat, as formerly, among the young lads, and have the pleasure to experience the respect my character in eloquence meets with from them. I lately came in upon them while they were warmly declaiming before a very full audience of persons of the first rank; the moment I appeared, they were silent. I mention this for their honour, rather than my own; and to let you see the just hopes you may conceive of placing your nephews here to their advantage. I purpose to hear all the several professors; and when I have done so, I shall write you such an account of them as will enable you (as far as a letter can) to judge of their respective abilities. The faithful execution of this important commission is what I owe to the friendship that subsists between us, and to the memory of your brother. Nothing certainly is more your concern, than that his children (I would have said *yours*, but that I know you now look upon them even with more tenderness than your own) may be found worthy of such a father, and such an uncle; and I should have claimed a part in that care, though you had not required it of me. I am sensible, in choosing a preceptor, I shall draw upon me the displeasure of all the rest of that profession: but when the interest of these young men is concerned, I esteem it my duty to hazard the displeasure, or even enmity, of any man, with as much resolution as a parent would for his own children. Farewell.

LETTER XXI.

To Cerealis.

You advise me to read my late speech before an assembly of my friends. I shall do so, since it is agreeable to your opinion, though I have many scruples about it. Compositions of this kind lose,

I well know, all their fire and force, and even almost their very name, by a plain recital. It is the solemnity of the tribunal, the concourse of one's friends, the expectation of the success, the emulation between the several orators concerned, the different parties formed amongst the audience in their favour; in a word, it is the air, the motion*, the attitude of the speaker, with all the corresponding gestures of his body, which conspire to give a spirit and grace to what he delivers. Hence those who sit when they plead, though they have most of the other advantages I just now mentioned, yet, from that single circumstance, weaken and depress the whole force of their eloquence. The eyes and hands of the reader, those important instances of graceful elocution, being engaged, it is no wonder the hearer grows languid while he has none of those awakening charms to excite and engage his attention. To these general considerations I must add this particular disadvantageous circumstance, which attends the speech in question, that it is chiefly of the argumentative kind; and it is natural for an author to suspect, that what he wrote with labour will not be read with pleasure. For who is there so unprejudiced as not to prefer the flowing and florid oration, to one in this close and unornamented style? It is very unreasonable there should be any difference; however, it is certain the judges generally expect one manner of pleading, and the audience another; whereas in truth an auditor ought to be affected only with those things which would strike him, were he in the place of the judge. Nevertheless, it is possible the objections which lie against this piece may be got over, in consideration of the novelty it has to recommend it; the novelty I mean with respect to us, for the Greek orators have a method, though upon a different occasion, not altogether unlike what I made use of. They, when they would throw out a law, as contrary to some former one unrepealed, argue by comparing those laws together; so I, on the contrary, endeavoured to shew that the crime, which I was insisting upon as

* Some of the Roman orators were as much too vehement in their action, as those of our own country are too calm and spiritless. In the violence of their elocution they not only used all the warmth of gesture, but actually walked backwards and forwards.

falling within the intent and meaning of the law relating to public extortions, was agreeable not only to that, but likewise to other laws of the same name. Those, who are not conversant in the laws of their country, can have no taste for reasonings of this kind; but those, who are, ought to be so much the more pleased with them. I shall endeavour, therefore, if you persist in my reciting it, to collect a judicious audience. But before you determine this point, I intreat you thoroughly to weigh the difficulties I have laid before you, and then decide as reason shall direct; for it is reason that must justify you: obedience to your commands will be a sufficient apology for me. Farewell.

LETTER XXII.

To Calvisius.

I NEVER spent my time more agreeably, I think, than I did lately with Spurrinna. I am so much pleased with the uninterrupted regularity of his way of life, that if ever I should arrive at old age, there is no man whom I would sooner choose for my model. I look upon order in human actions, especially at that advanced period, with the same sort of pleasure as I behold the settled course of the heavenly bodies. In youth, indeed, there is a certain irregularity and agitation by no means unbecoming; but in age, when business is unseasonable, and ambition indecent, all should be calm and uniform. This rule Spurrinna religiously pursues throughout his whole conduct. Even in those transactions which one might call minute and inconsiderable did they not occur every day, he observes a certain periodical season and method. The first part of the morning he devotes to study; at eight he dresses and walks about three miles, in which he enjoys at once contemplation and exercise. At his return, if he has any friends with him in his house, he enters upon some polite and useful topic of conversation; if he is alone, somebody reads to him; and sometimes too when he is not, if it is agreeable to his company. When this is over he reposes himself, and then again either takes up a book, or falls into some discourse even more entertaining and in-

structive. He afterwards takes the air in his chariot, either with his wife (who is a lady of uncommon merit) or with some friend: a happiness which lately was mine!—How agreeable, how noble is the enjoyment of him in that hour of privacy! You would fancy you were hearing some worthy of ancient times, inflaming your breast with the most heroic examples, and instructing your mind with the most exalted precepts; which yet he delivers with so modest an air, that there is not the least appearance of dictating in his conversation. When he has thus taken a tour of about seven miles, he gets out of his chariot and walks a mile more, after which he returns home, and either reposes himself, or retires to his study. He has an excellent taste for poetry, and composes in the lyric manner, both in Greek and Latin, with great judgment. It is surprising what an ease and spirit of gaiety runs through his verses, which the merit of the author renders still more valuable. When the baths are ready, which in winter is about three o'clock, and in summer about two, he undresses himself; and if there happens to be no wind, he walks for some time in the sun. After this he plays a considerable time at tennis; for by this sort of exercise too, he combats the effects of old age. When he has bathed, he throws himself upon his couch till supper time*, and in the mean while some agreeable and entertaining author is read to him. In this, as in all the rest, his friends are at full liberty to partake; or to employ themselves in any other manner more suitable to their taste. You sit down to an elegant yet frugal repast, which is served up in pure and antique plate. He has likewise a complete equipage for his side-board, in Corinthian metal†, which is his pleasure, not his passion. At his table he is frequently entertained with

* This was the principal meal among the Romans, at which all their feasts and invitations were made; they usually began it about their ninth hour, answering pretty nearly to our three o'clock in the afternoon. But as Spurrinna, we find, did not enter upon the exercises which always preceded this meal till the eighth or ninth hour, if we allow about three hours for that purpose, he could not sit down to table till towards six or seven o'clock.

† This metal, whatever it was composed of (for that point is by no means clear), was so highly esteemed among the ancients, that they preferred it even to gold.

comedians, that even his very amusements may be seasoned with good sense; and though he continues there, even in summer, till the night is something advanced, yet he prolongs the feast with so much affability and politeness, that none of his guests ever think it tedious. By this method of living he has preserved all his senses entire, and his body active and vigorous to his seventy-eighth year, without discovering any appearance of old age, but the wisdom. This is a sort of life which I ardently aspire after; as I purpose to enjoy it, when I shall arrive at those years which will justify a retreat from business. In the mean while I am embarrassed with a thousand affairs, in which Spurinna is at once my support and my example. As long as it became him he entered into all the duties of public life. It was by passing through the various offices of the state, by governing of provinces, and by indefatigable toil, that he merited the repose he now enjoys. I propose to myself the same course and the same end; and I give it to you under my hand that I do so. If an ill-timed ambition should carry me beyond it, produce this letter against me, and condemn me to repose, whenever I can enjoy it without being reproached with indolence. Farewell.

LETTER XXIII.

To Hispulla.

It is not easy to determine whether my love or esteem were greater for that wise and excellent man your father: but this is most certain, that in respect to his memory and your virtues, I have the tenderest value for you. Can I fail then to wish (as I shall by every means in my power endeavour) that your son may copy the virtues of both his grandfathers, particularly his maternal? as indeed his father and his uncle will furnish him also with very illustrious examples. The surest method to train him up in the steps of these valuable men, is early to season his mind with polite learning and useful knowledge; and it is of the last consequence from whom he receives these instructions. Hitherto he has had his education under your eye, and in your house, where he is exposed to few, I should rather say to no wrong impressions. But

he is now of an age to be sent from home, and it is time to place him with some professor of rhetoric; of whose discipline and method, but above all, of whose morals, you may be well satisfied. Among the many advantages for which this amiable youth is indebted to nature and fortune, he has that of a most beautiful person: it is necessary, therefore, in this loose and slippery age, to find out one who will not only be his tutor, but his guardian and his guide. I will venture to recommend Julius Genitor to you under that character. I love him, I confess, extremely; but my affection does by no means prejudice my judgment; on the contrary it is, in truth, the effect of it. His behaviour is grave, and his morals irreproachable; perhaps something too severe and rigid for the libertine manners of these times. His qualifications in his profession you may learn from many others; for the art of eloquence, as it is open to all the world, is soon discovered; but the qualities of the heart lie more concealed, and out of the reach of common observation; and it is on *that* side I undertake to be answerable for my friend. Your son will hear nothing from this worthy man, but what will be for his advantage to know, nor learn any thing of which it would be happier he should be ignorant. He will represent to him as often, and with as much zeal as you or I should, the virtues of his family, and what a glorious weight of characters he has to support. You will not hesitate then to place him with a tutor, whose first care will be to form his manners, and afterwards to instruct him in eloquence; an attainment ill acquired if with the neglect of moral improvements. Farewell.

LETTER XXIV.

To Traquillus.

THE obliging manner in which you desire me to confer the military tribunate upon your relation, which I had obtained of the most illustrious* Neratius Marcellus for yourself, is agreeable to that respect with which you always treat me. As it would have given me great plea-

* This was a title given to all senators, in the times of the latter emperors.

sure to have seen you in that post, so it will not be less acceptable to me to have it bestowed upon one whom you recommend. For hardly, I think, would it be consistent to wish a man advanced to honours, and yet envy him a title far nobler than any other he can receive, even that of a generous and an affectionate relation. To deserve and to grant favours, is the fairest point of view in which we can be placed; and this amiable character will be yours, if you resign to your friend what is due to your own merit. I must acknowledge at the same time I am by this means advancing my own reputation, as the world will learn from hence, that my friends not only have it in their power to enjoy such an honourable post, but to dispose of it. I readily therefore comply with your generous request; and as your name is not yet entered upon the roll, I can without difficulty insert Silvanus's in its stead: and may he accept this good office at your hands with the same grateful disposition that I am sure you will receive mine. Farewell.

LETTER XXV.

To Catilius.

I ACCEPT of your invitation to supper; but I must, make this agreement beforehand, that you dismiss me soon, and treat me frugally. Let our entertainment abound only in philosophical conversation, and even that too with moderation. There are certain midnight parties, which Cato himself could not safely fall in with; though I must confess at the same time, that Julius Cæsar*, when he reproaches him upon that head, exalts the character he endeavours to expose; for he describes those persons who met this reeling patriot, as blushing when they discovered who he was; and adds, you would have thought that Cato had detected them, and not they Cato. Could he place the dignity of Cato in a stronger light than by representing him thus venerable, even in his cups? As for ourselves, nevertheless, let temperance not only spread our table, but regulate our

hours; for we are not arrived at so high a reputation, that our enemies cannot censure us but to our honour. Farewell.

LETTER XXVI.

To Proculus.

You desire me to read your poems in my retirement, and to examine whether they are fit for public view; and after requesting me to turn some of my leisure hours from my own studies to yours, you remind me that Tully was remarkable for his generous encouragement and patronage of poetical geniuses. But you did not do me justice, if you supposed I wanted either intreaty or example upon this occasion, who not only honour the Muses with the most religious regard, but have also the warmest friendship for yourself: I shall therefore do what you require, with as much pleasure as care. I believe I may venture to declare beforehand, that your performance is extremely beautiful, and ought by no means to be suppressed; at least that was my opinion when I heard you recite it: if indeed your manner did not impose upon me: for the skill and harmony of your elocution is certainly enchanting. I trust, however, the charming cadence did not entirely overcome the force of my criticism; it might possibly a little soften its severity, but could not totally, I imagine, disarm me of it. I think therefore I may now safely pronounce my opinion of your poems in general; what they are in their several parts I shall judge when I read them.

LETTER XXVII.

To Nepos.

I HAVE frequently observed, that, amongst the noble actions and remarkable sayings of distinguished persons in either sex, those which have been most celebrated have not always been the most illustrious; and I am confirmed in this opinion, by a conversation I had yesterday with Fannia. This lady is granddaughter to that celebrated Arria, who animated her husband to meet death by her own glorious example. She informed me of several particulars relating to Arria,

* Julius Cæsar wrote an invective against Cato of Utica, to which, it is probable, Pliny here alludes.

not less heroic than this famous action of hers, though less taken notice of: which I am persuaded will raise your admiration as much as they did mine. Her husband Cæcinnus Pætus, and her son, were both at the same time attacked with a dangerous illness, of which the son died. This youth, who had a most beautiful person and amiable behaviour, was not less endeared to his parents by his virtues than by the ties of affection. His mother managed his funeral so privately, that Pætus did not know of his death. Whenever she came into his bed-chamber, she pretended her son was better: and as often as he inquired after his health, would answer that he had rested well, or had ate with an appetite. When she found she could no longer restrain her grief, but her tears were gushing out, she would leave the room, and having given vent to her passion, return again with dry eyes and a serene countenance, as if she had dismissed every sentiment of sorrow at her entrance. The action* was, no doubt, truly noble, when drawing the dagger she plunged it in her breast, and then presented it to her husband with that ever memorable, I had almost said, that divine expression, "Pætus it is not painful." It must, however, be considered, when she spoke and acted thus, she had the prospect of immortal glory before her eyes to encourage and support her. But was it not something much greater, without the view of such powerful motives, to hide her tears, to conceal her grief, and cheerfully seem the mother when she was so no more?

Scribonianus had taken up arms in Illyria against Claudius, where having lost his life, Pætus, who was of his party, was brought prisoner to Rome. When

they were going to put him on board a ship, Arria besought the soldiers that she might be permitted to go with him: Certainly, said she, you cannot refuse a man of consular dignity, as he is, a few slaves to wait upon him; but if you will take me, I alone will perform their office. This favour, however, she could not obtain; upon which she hired a small fishing vessel, and boldly ventured to follow the ship. At her return to Rome, she met the wife of Scribonianus in the emperor's palace, who pressing her to discover all she knew of that insurrection, What! said she, shall I regard thy advice, who saw thy husband murdered even in thy very arms, and yet survivest him? An expression which plainly shews, that the noble manner in which she put an end to her life was no unpremeditated effect of sudden passion. When Thrasea, who married her daughter, was dissuading her from her purpose of destroying herself, and, among other arguments which he used, said to her, Would you then advise your daughter to die with me, if my life were to be taken from me? Most certainly I would, she replied, if she had lived as long and in as much harmony with you as I have with my Pætus. This answer greatly heightened the alarm of her family, and made them observe her for the future more narrowly, which when she perceived, she assured them all their caution would be to no purpose. You may oblige me, said she, to execute my resolution in a way that will give me more pain, but it is impossible you should prevent it. She had scarce said this, when she sprang from her chair, and running her head with the utmost violence against the wall, she fell down, in appearance dead. But being brought to herself, I told you, said she, if you would not suffer me to take the easy paths to death, I should make my way to it through some more difficult passage. Now, is there not, my friend, something much greater in all this, than the so much talked of "Pætus, it is not painful?" to which, indeed, it seems to have led the way: and yet this last is the favourite topic of fame, while all the former are passed over in profound silence. Whence I cannot but infer, what I observed in the beginning of my letter, that the most famous actions are not always the most noble. Farewell.

* The story, as mentioned by several of the ancient historians, is to this purpose: Pætus having joined Scribonianus, who was in arms in Illyria against Claudius, was taken after the death of the latter, and condemned to death. Arria, having in vain solicited his life, persuaded him to destroy himself, rather than suffer the ignominy of falling by the executioner's hands; and in order to encourage him to an act, to which it seems he was not much inclined, she set him the example in the manner Pliny relates.

In a pleasure house belonging to the Villa Ludovisa at Rome there is a fine statue representing the action: Pætus is stabbing himself with one hand, and holds up the dying Arria with the other. Her sinking body hangs so loose, as if every joint were relaxed.

LETTER XXVIII.

To Servianus.

To what shall I attribute your long silence? Is it want of health, or want of leisure, that prevents your writing? Or is it, perhaps, that you have no opportunity of conveying your letters? Free me, I intreat you, from the perplexity of these doubts; for they are more, be assured, than I am able to support; and do so, even though it be at the expense of an express messenger: I will gladly bear his charges, and even reward him too, should he bring me the news I wish. As for myself, I am well; if that, with any propriety, can be said of a man who lives in the utmost suspense and anxiety, under the apprehensions of all the accidents which can possibly befall the friend he most tenderly loves. Farewell.

LETTER XXIX.

To Maximus.

You remember, no doubt, to have read what commotions were occasioned by the law which directs that the elections of magistrates shall be by balloting, and how much the author* of it was both approved and condemned. Yet this very law the senate lately unanimously received, and upon the election day, with one consent, called for the ballots. It must be owned, the method by open votes had introduced into the senate more riot and disorder than is seen even in the assemblies of the people; all order in speaking, all decency of silence, all dignity of character, was broke through; and it was universal dissonance and clamour; here, the several candidates running from side to side with their patrons; there, a troop collected together in the middle of the senate-house; and, in short, the whole assembly divided into separate parties, created the most indecent con-

fusion. Thus widely had we departed from the manners of our ancestors, who conducted these elections with a calmness and regularity suitable to the reverence which is due to the majesty of the senate. I have been informed by some who remember those times, that the method observed in their assemblies was this: the name of the person who offered himself for any office being called over, a profound silence ensued, when immediately the candidate appeared, who, after he had spoken for himself, and given an account to the senate of his life and manners, called witnesses in support of his character. These were, either the person under whom he had served in the army, or to whom he had been quæstor, or both (if the case admitted of it); to whom he also joined some of those friends who espoused his interest. They delivered what they had to say in his favour in few words, but with great dignity; and this had far more influence than the modern method of humble solicitation. Sometimes the candidate would object either to the birth, or age, or character of his competitor; to which the senate would listen with a severe and impartial attention; and thus was merit generally preferred to interest. But corruption having abused this wise institution of our ancestors, we were obliged to have recourse to the way of balloting, as the most probable remedy for this evil. The method being new, and immediately put in practice, it answered the present purpose very well: but, I am afraid, in process of time it will introduce new inconveniences; as this manner of balloting seems to afford a sort of screen to injustice and partiality. For how few are there who preserve the same delicacy of conduct in secret, as when exposed to the view of the world? The truth is, the generality of mankind revere Fame more than Conscience. But this, perhaps, may be pronouncing too hastily upon a future contingency: be it therefore as it may, we have in the mean time obtained by this method an election of such magistrates as best deserved the honour. For it was with us as with those sort of judges who are named upon the spot; we were taken before we had time to be biassed, and therefore determined impartially.

I have given you this detail, not only as a piece of news, but because I am glad

* The author of this law was one Gabinius, a tribune of the people, A. U. 614. It gave a very considerable blow to the influence of the nobility, as in this way of balloting it could not be discovered on which side the people gave their votes, and consequently took off that restraint they before lay under, by the fear of offending their superiors.

to seize every opportunity of speaking of the republic; a subject, which as we have fewer occasions of mentioning than our ancestors, so we ought to be more careful not to let any of them slip. In good earnest, I am tired with repeating over and over the same compliments, How d'ye do? and I hope you are well. Why should our letters for ever turn upon trivial and domestic concerns? It is true, indeed, the direction of the public weal is in the hands of a single person, who, for the general good, takes upon himself solely to ease us of the care and weight of government; but still that bountiful source of power permits, by a very generous dispensation, some streams to flow down to us; and of these we may not only taste ourselves, but thus, as it were, administer them to our absent friends. Farewell.

LETTER XXX.

To Fabatus.

You have long desired a visit from your grand-daughter* and myself. Nothing, be assured, could be more agreeable to us both; for we equally wish to see you, and are determined to delay that pleasure no longer. For this purpose, our baggage is actually making ready, and we are hastening to you with all the expedition the roads will permit. We shall stop only once, and that for a short time, intending to turn a little out of the way in order to go into Tuscany; not for the sake of looking upon our estate and into our family concerns, for that we could defer to another opportunity; but to perform an indispensable duty. There is a town near my estate, called Tifer-num-upon-the-Tiber†, which put itself under my patronage when I was yet a youth. These people enter extremely into my interest, celebrate my arrival among them, express the greatest concern when I leave them, and, in short, give every proof of an affection towards me, as strong as it is undeserved. That I may return their good offices (for what generous mind can bear to be excelled in acts of friendship?) I have built a temple in this place, at my own expense;

and as it is finished, it would be a sort of impiety to omit the dedication of it any longer. We design, therefore, to be there on the day that ceremony is to be performed, and I have resolved to celebrate it with a grand feast. We may possibly continue there all the next day, but we shall make so much the more expedition upon the road. May we have the happiness to find you and your daughter in good health! as I am sure we shall in good spirits, if you see us safely arrived. Farewell.

LETTER XXXI.

To Clemens.

REGULUS has lost his son, and it is perhaps the only undeserved misfortune which could have befallen him; for I much doubt whether he thinks it one. The boy was of a sprightly but ambiguous turn; however, he seemed capable enough of steering right, if he could have avoided splitting upon his father's example. Regulus gave him his freedom‡, in order to entitle him to the estate left him by his mother; and when he got into possession of it, endeavoured (as the character of the man made it generally believed) to wheedle him out of it, by the most singular and indecent complaisance. This perhaps you will scarce think credible; but if you consider Regulus, you will not be long of that opinion. However, he now expresses his concern for the loss of this youth in a most outrageous manner. The boy had a great number of little coach and saddle horses; dogs of different sorts, together with parrots, blackbirds, and nightingales§ in abundance; all these Regulus slew|| round

† The Romans had an absolute power over their children, of which no age or station of the latter deprived them.

§ This bird was much esteemed among nice eaters, and was sold at a high price. Horace mentions, as an instance of great extravagance, two brothers who used to dine upon them:

*Quinti progenies Arri, par nobile fratrum—
Lusciniæ soliti impenso prandere coëmtas.*

L. 2. Sat. 3.

A noble pair of brothers—

On nightingales of monstrous purchase din'd.
MR. FRANCIS.

|| From an unaccountable notion that prevailed among the ancients, that the ghosts delighted in blood, it was customary to kill a great

* Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

† Now Citta di Castello.

the funeral pile of his son, in the ostentation of an affected grief. He is visited upon this occasion by a surprising number of people, who though they secretly detest and abhor him, yet are as assiduous in their attendance upon him, as if they were influenced by a principle of real esteem and affection: or, to speak my sentiments in few words, they endeavour to recommend themselves to his favour by following his example. He has retired to his villa across the Tiber; where he has covered a vast extent of ground with his porticos, and crowded all the shore with his statues: for he blends prodigality with covetousness, and vain-glory with infamy. By his continuing there, he lays his visitors under the great inconvenience of coming to him at this unwholesome season; and he seems to consider the trouble they put themselves to, as a matter of consolation. He gives out, with his usual absurdity, that he designs to marry. You must expect, therefore, to hear shortly of the wedding of a man oppress'd with sorrow and years; that is, of one who marries both too soon and too late. Do you ask me why I conjecture thus? Certainly, not because he affirms it himself (for never was there so infamous a liar), but because there is no doubt that Regulus will do every thing he ought not. Farewell.

LETTER XXXII.

To Antoninus.

THAT you have twice enjoyed the dignity of consul, with a conduct equal to that of our most illustrious ancestors; that few (your modesty will not suffer me to say none) ever have, or ever will come up to the integrity and wisdom of your Asiatic administration: that in virtue, in authority, and even in years, you are the first of Romans; these, most certainly, are shining and noble parts of your character; nevertheless, I own it is in your retired hours that I most admire you. To season the severity of business with the sprightliness of wit, and to temper wisdom with politeness, is

number of beasts, and throw them on the funeral pile. In the more ignorant and barbarous ages, men were the unhappy victims of this horrid rite.

as difficult as it is great: yet these uncommon qualities you have most happily united in those wonderful charms, which not only grace your conversation, but particularly distinguish your writings. Your lips, like the venerable old man's in Homer*, drop honey, and one would imagine the bee had diffused her sweetness over all you compose. These were the sentiments I had when I lately read your Greek epigrams and satires. What elegance, what beauties shine in this collection! how sweetly the numbers flow, and how exactly are they wrought up in the true spirit of the ancients! What a vein of wit runs through every line, and how conformable is the whole to the rules of just criticism! I fancied I had got in my hands Callimachus or Hesiod; or, if possible, some poet even superior to these; though indeed neither of those authors excelled, as you have, in both those species of poetry. Is it possible, that a Roman can write Greek in so much perfection? I protest I do not believe Athens herself can be more Attic. To own the truth, I cannot but envy Greece the honour of your preference. And since you can write thus elegantly in a foreign language, it is past conjecture what you could have performed in your own. Farewell.

LETTER XXXIII.

To Naso.

A STORM of hail, I am informed, has destroyed all the produce of my estate in Tuscany; whilst that which I have on the other side the Po, though it has proved extremely fruitful this season, yet from the excessive cheapness of every thing, turns to small account. Laurentinum is the single possession which yields me any advantage. I have nothing there, indeed, but a house and gardens; all the rest is barren sands; still, however, my best productions rise at Laurentinum. It is there I cultivate, if

† ——— Νεστωρ
 Ηδυεπής ανορουσε, λιγος Πελιων αγορηνης,
 Του και απο γλωσσης μελιτος γλυκιων ρεεν αυδη.
 Il. i. 247.

Experienc'd Nestor, in persuasion skill'd;
 Words sweet as honey from his lips distill'd.
 POPE.

not my lands, at least my mind, and form many a composition. As in other places I can shew you full barns, so there I can entertain you with good store of the literary kind. Let me advise you then, if you wish for a never-failing revenue, to purchase something upon this contemplative coast. Farewell.

LETTER XXXIV.

To Lepidus.

I HAVE often told you that Regulus is a man of spirit; whatever he engages in, he is sure to execute it in a most extraordinary manner. He chose lately to be extremely concerned for the loss of his son: accordingly he mourned for him in a way which no man ever mourned before. He took it into his head that he would have several statues and representations of him; immediately all the artisans in Rome are set to work. Colours, wax, brass, silver, ivory, marble, all exhibit the figure of young Regulus. Not long ago he read, before a numerous audience, a panegyric upon the life of his son: a large book upon the life of a boy! then a thousand transcribers were employed to copy this curious anecdote, which he dispersed all over the empire. He wrote likewise a sort of circular letter to the several Decurii, to desire they would choose out one of their order who had a strong clear voice, to read this eulogy to the people; and I am informed it has been done accordingly. Had this spirit (or whatever else you will call an earnestness in executing all one undertakes) been rightly applied, what infinite good might it have produced! The misfortune is, this active cast is generally strongest in men of vicious characters: for as ignorance begets rashness, and knowledge inspires caution; so modesty is apt to depress and weaken the great and well-formed genius, whilst boldness supports and strengthens low and little minds. Regulus is a strong proof of the truth of this observation: he has a weak voice, an awkward address, a thick speech, a slow imagination, and no memory; in a word, he has nothing but an extravagant genius: and yet by the assistance of this flighty turn and much impudence, he passes with many

for a finished orator. Herennius Senecio reversed Cato's definition of an orator*, and applied it with great justness to Regulus: An orator, said he, is a bad man unskilled in the art of speaking. And, in good earnest, Cato's definition is not a more exact description of a true orator, than Senecio's is of the character of this man. Would you make a suitable return to this letter, let me know if you, or any of my friends in your town have with an air of pleasantry mouthed (as Demosthenes calls it) this melancholy piece to the people, like a stroller in the market-place. For so absurd a performance must move rather laughter than compassion; and indeed the composition is as puerile as the subject. Farewell.

LETTER XXXV.

To Cornelius Tacitus.

I REJOICE that you are safely arrived in Rome; for though I am always desirous to see you, I am more particularly so now. I purpose to continue a few days longer at my house at Tusculum, in order to finish a work which I have upon my hands. For I am afraid, should I put a stop to this design now that it is so nearly completed, I shall find it difficult to resume it. In the mean while, that I may lose no time, I send this letter before me, to request a favour of you, which I hope shortly to ask in person. But before I inform you what my request is, I must let you into the occasion of it. Being lately at Comum, the place of my nativity, a young lad, son to one of my neighbours, made me a visit. I asked him whether he studied oratory, and where? He told me he did, and at Mediolanum†. And why not here? Because (said his father, who came with him) we have no masters. "No! (said I), surely it nearly concerns you who are fathers (and very opportunely several of the company were so) that your sons should receive their education here, rather than any where else.

* Cato, as we learn from Nonius, composed a treatise upon rhetoric, for the use of his son, wherein he defined an orator to be, A good man skilled in the art of speaking.

† Milan.

For where can they be placed more agreeably than in their own country, or instructed with more safety and less expense than at home and under the eye of their parents? Upon what very easy terms might you, by a general contribution, procure proper masters, if you would only apply towards the raising a salary for them, the extraordinary expense it costs you for your sons' journeys, lodgings, and whatever else you pay for upon account of their being abroad; as pay, indeed, you must in such a case for every thing. Though I have no children myself, yet I shall willingly contribute to a design so beneficial to (what I look upon as a child or a parent) my country; and therefore I will advance a third part of any sum you shall think proper to raise for this purpose. I would take upon myself the whole expense, were I not apprehensive that my benefaction might hereafter be abused and perverted to private ends; as I have observed to be the case in several places where public foundations of this nature have been established. The single means to prevent this mischief is, to leave the choice of the masters entirely in the breast of the parents, who will be so much the more careful to determine properly, as they shall be obliged to share the expense of maintaining them. For though they may be careless in disposing of another's bounty, they will certainly be cautious how they apply their own; and will see that none but those who deserve it shall receive my money, when they must at the same time receive theirs too. Let my example then encourage you to unite heartily in this useful design; and be assured the greater the sum my share shall amount to, the more agreeable it will be to me. You can undertake nothing that will be more advantageous to your children, nor more acceptable to your country. They will by this means receive their education where they receive their birth, and be accustomed from their infancy to inhabit and affect their native soil. May you be able to procure professors of such distinguished abilities, that the neighbouring towns shall be glad to draw their learning from hence; and as you now send your children to foreigners for education, may foreigners

in their turn flock hither for their instruction."

I thought proper thus to lay open to you the rise of this affair, that you might be the more sensible how agreeable it will be to me, if you undertake the office I request. I intreat you, therefore, with all the earnestness a matter of so much importance deserves, to look out, amongst the great numbers of men of letters which the reputation of your genius brings to you, proper persons to whom we may apply for this purpose; but without entering into any agreement with them on my part. For I would leave it entirely free to the parents to judge and choose as they shall see proper: all the share I pretend to claim is, that of contributing my care and my money. If, therefore, any one shall be found who thinks himself qualified for the undertaking, he may repair thither; but without relying upon any thing but his merit. Farewell.

LETTER XXXVI.

To Valerius Paulinus.

REJOICE with me, my friend, not only upon my account, but your own, and that of the public; for eloquence is still held in honour. Being lately engaged to plead in a cause before the Centumviri, the crowd was so great that I could not get to my place, but in passing by the tribunal where the judges sat. And I have this pleasing circumstance to add farther, that a young nobleman, having lost his robe in the press, stood in his vest to hear me for seven hours together: for so long I was speaking; and with a success equal to my great fatigue. Come on then, my friend, and let us earnestly pursue our studies, nor screen our own indolence under pretence of that of the public. Never, we may rest assured, will there be wanting hearers and readers, so long as we can supply them with orators and authors worthy of their attention. Farewell.

LETTER XXXVII.

To Gallus.

You acquaint me that Cæcilius, the consul elect, has commenced a suit against Correllia, and earnestly beg me to undertake her cause in her absence. As I have reason to thank you for your information, so I have to complain of your intreaties: without the first, indeed, I should have been ignorant of this affair, but the last was unnecessary, as I want no solicitations to comply, where it would be ungenerous in me to refuse; for can I hesitate a moment to take upon myself the protection of a daughter of Correllius? It is true, indeed, though there is no particular intimacy between her adversary and me, we are, however, upon good terms. It is true likewise, that he is a person of great rank, and who has a claim to particular regard from me, as he is entering upon an office which I have had the honour to fill; and it is natural for a man to be desirous those dignities should be treated with the highest respect, which he himself once possessed. Yet these considerations have little weight, when I reflect that it is the daughter of Correllius whom I am to defend. The memory of that excellent person, than whom this age has not produced a man of greater dignity, rectitude, and good sense, is indelibly impressed upon my mind. I admired him before I was acquainted with him; and, contrary to what is usually the case, my esteem increased in proportion as I knew him better: and indeed I knew him thoroughly, for he treated me without reserve, and admitted me to share in his joys and his sorrows, in his gay and his serious hours. When I was but a youth, he esteemed, and (I will even venture to say) revered me as if I had been his equal. When I solicited any post of honour, he supported me with his interest, and recommended me by his testimony: when I entered upon it, he was my introducer and my attendant: when I exercised it, he was my guide and my counselor. In a word, wherever my interest was concerned, he exerted himself with as much alacrity as if he had been in all his health and vigour. In private, in public, and at court, how often has he advanced and supported my reputation! It happened once, that the conversation

before the emperor Nerva turned upon the hopeful young men of that time, and several of the company were pleased to mention me with applause: he sat for a little while silent, which gave what he said the greater weight; and then with that air of dignity, to which you are no stranger, I must be reserved, said he, in my praises of Pliny, because he does nothing without my advice. By which single sentence he gave me a greater character than I would presume even to wish for, as he represented my conduct to be always such as wisdom must approve, since it was wholly under the direction of one of the wisest of men. Even in his last moments he said to his daughter (as she often mentions), I have in the course of a long life raised up many friends to you; but there is none that you may more assuredly depend upon, than Pliny and Cornutus. A circumstance I cannot reflect upon, without being deeply sensible how much it is incumbent upon me, to endeavour to act up to the opinion so excellent a judge of mankind conceived of me. I shall therefore most readily give my assistance to Correllia in this affair; and willingly hazard any displeasure I may incur by appearing in her cause. Though I should imagine, if in the course of my pleadings I should find an opportunity to explain and enforce, more at large than I can do in a letter, the reasons I have here mentioned, upon which I rest at once my apology and my glory; her adversary (whose suit may perhaps, as you say, be entirely unprecedented, as it is against a woman) will not only excuse, but approve my conduct. Farewell.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Hispulla.

As you are an exemplary instance of tender regard to your family in general, and to your late excellent brother in particular, whose affection you returned with an equal warmth of sentiment; and have not only shewn the kindness of an aunt, but supplied the loss of a tender parent to his daughter*, you will hear, I am well persuaded, with infinite pleasure, that she behaves worthy of her father, her grandfather, and yourself.

* Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

She possesses an excellent understanding, together with a consummate prudence, and gives the strongest testimony of the purity of her heart by her fondness of me. Her affection to me has given her a turn to books; and my compositions, which she takes a pleasure in reading, and even getting by heart, are continually in her hands. How full of tender solicitude is she when I am entering upon any cause! How kindly does she rejoice with me when it is over! While I am pleading, she places persons to inform her from time to time how I am heard, what applauses I receive, and what success attends the cause. When at any time I recite my works, she conceals herself behind some curtain, and with secret rapture enjoys my praises. She sings my verses to her lyre, with no other master but love, the best instructor, for her guide. From these happy circumstances I draw my most assured hopes, that the harmony between us will increase with our days, and be as lasting as our lives. For it is not my youth or my person, which time gradually impairs; it is my reputation and my glory of which she is enamoured. But what less could be expected from one who was trained by your hands, and formed by your instructions; who was early familiarised under your roof with all that is worthy and amiable, and was first taught to conceive an affection for me, by the advantageous colours in which you were pleased to represent me? And as you revered my mother with all the respect due even to a parent, so you kindly directed and encouraged my infancy, presaging of me from that early period all that my wife now fondly imagines I really am. Accept therefore of our mutual thanks, that you have thus, as it were designedly, formed us for each other. Farewell.

LETTER XXXIX.

To Maximus.

I HAVE already acquainted you with my opinion of each particular part of your work, as I perused it; I must now tell you my general thoughts of the whole. It is a strong and beautiful performance; the sentiments are sublime and masculine, and conceived in all the variety of a pregnant imagination; the diction is chaste and elegant; the figures are hap-

pily chosen, and a copious and diffusive vein of eloquence runs through the whole, and raises a very high idea of the author. You seem borne away by the full tide of a strong imagination and deep sorrow, which mutually assist and heighten each other; for your genius gives sublimity and majesty to your passion: and your passion adds strength and poignancy to your genius. Farewell.

LETTER XL.

To Velius Cerealis.

How severe a fate has attended the daughters of Helvidius! These two sisters are both dead in child-bed, after having each of them been delivered of a girl. This misfortune pierces me with the deepest sorrow; as indeed, to see two such amiable young ladies fall a sacrifice to their fruitfulness, in the prime and flower of their years, is a misfortune which I cannot too greatly lament. I lament for the unhappy condition of the poor infants, who are thus become orphans from their birth: I lament for the sake of the disconsolate husbands of these ladies; and I lament too for my own. The affection I bear to the memory of their late father is inviolable, as my defence of him in the senate, and all my writings, will witness for me. Of three children which survived him, there now remains but one; and his family, that had lately so many noble supports, rests only upon a single person! It will however be a great mitigation of my affliction, if fortune shall kindly spare that one, and render him worthy of his father and grandfather*: and I am so much the more anxious for his welfare and good conduct, as he is the only branch of the family remaining. You know the softness and solicitude of my heart where I have any tender attachments; you must not won-

* The famous Helvidius Priscus, who signalized himself in the senate by the freedom of his speeches in favour of liberty, during the reigns of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian; in whose time he was put to death by the order of the senate, though contrary to the inclination of the emperor, who countermanded the execution: but it was too late, the executioner having performed his office before the messenger arrived. Tacitus represents him as acting in all the various duties of social life with one consistent tenor of uniform virtue; superior to all temptations of wealth, of inflexible integrity, and unbroken courage.

der then that I have many fears where I have great hopes. Farewell.

LETTER XLII.

To Valens.

BEING engaged lately in a cause before the Centumviri, it occurred to me that when I was a youth I was also concerned in one which passed through the same courts. I could not forbear, as usual, to pursue the reflection my mind had started, and to consider if there were any of those advocates then present, who were joined with me in the former cause; but I found I was the only person remaining who had been counsel in both: such changes does the instability of human nature, or the vicissitudes of fortune, produce! Death had removed some; banishment others; age and infirmities had silenced those, while these were withdrawn to enjoy the happiness of retirement; one was at the head of an army; and the indulgence of the prince had exempted another from the burthen of civil employments. What turns of fortune have I experienced even in my own person! It was eloquence that first raised me; it was eloquence that occasioned my disgrace; and it was eloquence that advanced me again. The friendships of the wise and good, at my first appearance in the world, were highly serviceable to me; the same friendships proved afterward extremely prejudicial to my interest; and now again they are my ornament and support. If you compute the time in which these incidents have happened, it is but a few years; if you number the events, it seems an age. A lesson that will teach us to check both our despair and presumption, when we observe such a variety of revolutions roll round in so swift and narrow a circle. It is my custom to communicate to my friend all my thoughts, and to set before him the same rules and examples by which I regulate my own conduct; and such was my design in this letter. Farewell.

LETTER XLIII.

To Maximus.

I MENTIONED to you in a former letter, that I apprehended the method of voting by ballots would be attended with inconveniences; and so it has proved. At

the last election of magistrates, upon some of the tablets were written several pieces of pleasantry, and even indecencies; in one particularly, instead of the name of the candidate, were inserted the names of those who espoused his interest. The senate was extremely exasperated at this insolence; and with one voice threatened the vengeance of the emperor upon the author. But he lay concealed, and possibly might be in the number of those who expressed the greatest indignation. What must one think of such a man's private conduct, who in public, upon so important an affair, and at so solemn a time, could indulge himself in such scurrilous liberties, and dare to act the droll in the face of the senate? Who will know it? is the argument that prompts little and base minds to commit these indecencies. Secure from being discovered by others, and unawed by any self-respect, they take their pen and tablets; and hence arise these buffooneries, which are fit only for the stage. What course shall we take, what remedy apply against this abuse? Our disorders indeed in general have everywhere eluded all attempts to restrain them. But this is a point much too high for us, and will be the care of that superior power, who by these low but daring insults has daily fresh occasions of exerting all his pains and vigilance. Farewell.

LETTER XLIII.

To Nepos.

THE request you make me to supervise the correction of my works, which you have taken the pains to collect, I shall most willingly comply with; as indeed there is nothing I ought to do with more readiness, especially at your instance. When a man of such dignity, learning, and eloquence, deeply engaged in business, and entering upon the important government of a province, has so good an opinion of my works as to think them worth taking with him, how am I obliged to endeavour that this part of his baggage may not seem an useless embarrassment! My first care therefore shall be, that they may attend you with all the advantages possible; and my next, to supply you at your return with others, which you may not think undeserving to be added to them; for I can have no

stronger encouragement to enter upon some new work, than being assured of finding a reader of your taste and discernment. Farewell.

LETTER XLIV.

To Licinius.

I HAVE brought you as a present out of the country, a query which well deserves the consideration of your extensive erudition. There is a spring which rises in a neighbouring mountain, and running among the rocks is received into a little banqueting-room, from whence, after being detained a short time, it falls into the Larian lake. The nature of this spring is extremely surprising: it ebbs and flows regularly three times a day. This increase and decrease is plainly visible, and very entertaining to observe. You sit down by the side of the fountain, and whilst you are taking a repast, and drinking its water, which is extremely cool, you see it gradually rise and fall. If you place a ring, or any thing else at the bottom when it is dry, the stream reaches it by degrees till it is entirely covered, and then again gently retires from it; and this you may see it do for three times successively. Shall we say, that some secret current of air stops and opens the fountain-head, as it advances to or recedes from it; as we see in bottles and other vessels of that nature, where there is not a free and open passage, though you turn their necks downwards, yet the outward air obstructing the vent, they discharge their contents as it were by starts? Or may it not be accounted for upon the same principle as the flux and reflux of the sea? or, as those rivers, which discharge themselves into the sea, meeting with contrary winds and the swell of the ocean, are forced back in their channels; so may there not be something that checks this fountain, for a time, in its progress? or is there rather a certain reservoir that contains these waters in the bowels of the earth, which while it is recruiting its discharges, the stream flows more slowly and in less quantity, but when it has collected its due measure, it runs again into its usual strength and fulness? or lastly, is there not I know not what kind of subterraneous poise, that throws up the water when the

fountain is dry, and repels it when it is full? You, who are so well qualified for the inquiry, will examine the reasons of this wonderful appearance*; it will be sufficient for me if I have given you a clear description of it. Farewell.

LETTER XLV.

To Maximus.

I AM deeply afflicted with the news I have received of the death of Fannius, not only as I have lost in him a friend whose eloquence and politeness I admired, but a guide whose judgment I pursued; and indeed he possessed a most penetrating genius, improved and quickened by great experience. There are some circumstances attending his death, which aggravate my concern: he left behind him a will which had been made a considerable time, by which it happens his estate has fallen into the hands of those who had incurred his displeasure, while his greatest favourites have no share of it. But what I particularly regret is, that he has left unfinished a very noble work in which he was engaged. Notwithstanding his full employment at the bar, he had undertaken a history of those persons who had been put to death or banished by Nero; of which he had perfected three books. They are written with great delicacy and exactness: the style is pure, and preserves a proper medium between the plain narrative and the historical: and as they were very favourably received by the public, he was the more desirous of being able to complete the rest. The hand of death, is ever, in my estimation, too severe and too sudden when it falls upon such as are employed in some immortal work. The sons of sensuality, who have no views beyond the present hour, terminate with each day the whole purpose of their lives; but those who look forward to posterity, and endeavour to extend their memories to future generations by useful labours: to such, death is always immature, as it still snatches them from amidst some unfinished design. Fannius, long before

* There are several of these periodical fountains in different parts of the world: as we have some in England. Lay-well near Torbay is mentioned in the Philosophical Transactions (No. 104, p. 509.) to ebb and flow several times every hour.

his death, had a strong presentiment of what has happened: he dreamed one night, that as he was in his study with his papers before him, Nero came in, and placing himself by his side, took up the three first books of his history, which he read through, and then went away. This dream greatly alarmed him, and he looked upon it as an intimation that he should not carry on his history any farther than Nero had read: and so the event proved. I cannot reflect upon this accident without lamenting that he should not be able to accomplish a work, which had cost him so much pains and vigilance, as it suggests to me at the same time the thoughts of my own mortality, and the fate of my writings: and I am persuaded the same reflection alarms your apprehensions for those in which you are employed. Let us then, my friend, while yet we live, exert all our endeavours, that death, whenever it arrives, may find as little as possible to destroy. Farewell.

LETTER XLVI.

To Capito.

You are not singular in the advice you give me to undertake the writing of history; it is a work which has been frequently pressed upon me by several others of my friends; and what I have some thoughts of engaging in. Not that I have any confidence of succeeding in this way; that would be too rashly presuming upon the success of an experiment which I have never yet made; but because it is a noble employment to rescue from oblivion those who deserve to be eternally remembered, and extend the reputation of others at the same time that we advance our own. Nothing, I confess, so strongly affects me as the desire of a lasting name: a passion highly worthy of the human breast, especially of one who, not being conscious to himself of any ill, is not afraid of being known to posterity. It is the continual subject therefore of my thoughts,

By what fair deed I too may raise my name*;
for to that I moderate my wishes; the
rest,

And gather round the world immortal fame,
is much beyond my hopes:

* Virgil. 1 Georg. sub. init.

“Though yet†”—However, the first is sufficient, and history perhaps is the single means that can ensure it to me. Oratory and poetry, unless carried to the highest point of eloquence, are talents but of small recommendation to those who possess them; but history, however executed, is always entertaining. Mankind are naturally inquisitive, and are so fond of having this turn gratified, that they will listen with attention to the plainest matter of fact, and the most idle tale. But besides this, I have an example in my own family that inclines me to engage in this study, my uncle and adoptive father having acquired great reputation as a very accurate historian; and the philosophers, you know, recommend it to us to tread in the steps of our ancestors, when they have gone before us in the right path. If you ask me then, why I do not immediately enter upon the task? my reason is this: I have pleaded some very important causes, and (though I am not extremely sanguine in my hopes concerning them) I have determined to revise my speeches, lest, for want of this remaining labour, all the pains they cost me should be thrown away, and they with their author be buried in oblivion; for with respect to posterity, the work that was never finished was never begun. You will think, perhaps, I might correct my pleadings and write history at the same time. I wish indeed I were capable of doing so; but they are both such great undertakings, that either of them is abundantly sufficient. I was but nineteen when I first appeared at the bar; and yet it is only now at last I understand (and that in truth but imperfectly) what is essential to a complete orator. How then shall I be able to support the weight of an additional burthen? It is true indeed, history and oratory have in many points a general resemblance; yet in those very things in which they seem to agree, there are several circumstances wherein they differ. Narration is common to them both, but it is a narration of a distinct kind: the former contents itself frequently with low and vulgar facts; the

† Part of a verse from the fifth Æneid, where Mnestheus, one of the competitors in the naval games, who was in some danger of being distanced, exhorts his men to exert their utmost vigour to prevent such a disgrace.

latter requires every thing splendid, elevated, and extraordinary; strength and nerves is sufficient in *that*, but beauty and ornament is essential to *this*: the excellency of the one consists in a strong, severe, and close style; of the other, in a diffusive, flowing, and harmonious narration: in short, the words, the emphasis, and the whole turn and structure of the periods, are extremely different in these two arts; for, as Thucydides observes, there is a wide distance between compositions which are calculated for a present purpose, and those which are designed to remain as lasting monuments to posterity; by the first of which expressions he alludes to oratory, and by the other to history. For these reasons I am not inclined to blend together two performances of such distinct natures, which, as they are both of the highest rank, necessarily therefore require a separate attention; lest, confounded by a crowd of different ideas, I should introduce into the one what is only proper to the other. Therefore (to speak in our language of the bar) I must beg leave the cause may be adjourned some time longer. In the mean while, I refer it to your consideration from what period I shall commence my history. Shall I take it up from those remote times which have been treated of already by others? In this way, indeed, the materials will be ready prepared to my hands, but the collating of the several historians will be extremely troublesome; or shall I write only of the present times, and those wherein no other author has gone before me? If so, I may probably give offence to many, and please but few. For, in an age so overrun with vice, you will find infinitely more to condemn than approve; yet your praise, though ever so lavish, will be thought too reserved; and your censure, though ever so cautious, too profuse. However, this does not at all discourage me; for I want not sufficient resolution to bear testimony to truth. I expect then that you prepare the way which you have pointed out to me, and determine what subject I shall fix upon for my history, that when I am ready to enter upon the task you have assigned me, I may not be delayed by any new difficulty. Farewell.

LETTER XLVII.

To Saturninus.

YOUR letter made very different impressions upon me, as it brought me news which I both rejoiced and grieved to receive. It gave me a pleasure when it informed me you were detained in Rome; which though you will tell me, is a circumstance that affords you none, yet I cannot but rejoice at it, since you assure me you continue there upon my account, and defer the recital of your work till my return, for which I am greatly obliged to you. But I was much concerned at that part of your letter which mentioned the dangerous illness of Julius Valens; though, indeed, with respect to himself it ought to affect me with other sentiments, as it cannot but be for his advantage the sooner he is relieved by death from a distemper of which there is no hope he can ever be cured. But what you add concerning Avitus, who died in his return from the province where he had been quaestor, is an accident that justly demands our sorrow. That he died on board a ship, at a distance from his brother whom he tenderly loved, and from his mother and sisters, are circumstances, which though they cannot affect him now, yet undoubtedly did in his last moments, as well as tend to heighten the affliction of those he has left behind. How severe is the reflection, that a youth of his well-formed disposition should be extinct in the prime of life, and snatched from those high honours to which his virtues, had they been permitted to grow to their full maturity, would certainly have raised him! How did his bosom glow with the love of the fine arts! How many books has he perused! How many volumes has he transcribed! But the fruits of his labours are now perished with him, and for ever lost to posterity.—Yet why indulge my sorrow? a passion which, if we once give a loose to it, will aggravate every the slightest circumstance. I will put an end therefore to my letter, that I may to the tears which yours has drawn from me. Farewell.

LETTER XLVIII.

To Marcellinus.

I WRITE this to you under the utmost oppression of sorrow: the youngest

daughter of my friend Fundanus is dead? Never surely was there a more agreeable and more amiable young person, or one who better deserved to have enjoyed a long, I had almost said an immortal life! She was scarce fourteen, and yet had all the wisdom of age and discretion of a matron, joined with youthful sweetness and virgin modesty. With what an engaging fondness did she behave to her father! How kindly and respectfully receive his friends! How affectionately treat all those who in their respective offices had the care and education of her! She employed much of her time in reading, in which she discovered great strength of judgment; she indulged herself in few diversions, and those with much caution. With what forbearance, with what patience, with what courage did she endure her last illness; she complied with all the directions of her physicians; she encouraged her sister and her father; and when all her strength of body was exhausted, supported herself by the single vigour of her mind. That, indeed, continued even to her last moments, unbroken by the pain of a long illness, or the terrors of approaching death; and it is a reflection which makes the loss of her so much the more to be lamented. A loss infinitely severe! and more severe by the particular conjuncture in which it happened! She was contracted to a most worthy youth; the wedding day was fixed, and we were all invited. How sad a change from the highest joy to the deepest sorrow! How shall I express the wound that pierced my heart, when I heard Fundanus himself (as grief is ever finding out circumstances to aggravate its melancholy) ordering the money he had designed to lay out upon clothes and jewels for her marriage, to be employed in myrrh and spices for her funeral! He is a man of great learning and good sense, who has applied himself from his earliest youth to the nobler and most elevated studies; but all the maxims of fortitude which he has received from books, or advanced himself, he now absolutely rejects, and every other virtue of his heart gives place to all a parent's tenderness. You will excuse, you will even approve his sorrow, when you consider what he has lost. He has lost a daughter who resembled him in his manners as well as his person, and exactly copied out all her father. If you shall

think proper to write to him upon the subject of so reasonable a grief, let me remind you not to use the rougher arguments of consolation, and such as seem to carry a sort of reproof with them, but those of kind and sympathizing humanity. Time will render him more open to the dictates of reason; for, as a fresh wound shrinks back from the hand of the surgeon, but by degrees submits to, and even requires the means of its cure, so a mind under the first impressions of a misfortune shuns and rejects all arguments of consolation, but at length, if applied with tenderness, calmly and willingly acquiesces in them. Farewell.

LETTER XLIX.

To Spurrina.

KNOWING, as I do, how much you admire the polite arts, and what satisfaction you take in seeing young men of quality pursue the steps of their ancestors, I seize this earliest opportunity of informing you, that I went to-day to hear Calpurnius Piso read a poem he has composed upon a very bright and learned subject, entitled the Constellations. His numbers, which were elegiac, were soft, flowing, and easy, at the same time that they had all the sublimity suitable to such a noble topic. He varied his style from the lofty to the simple, from the close to the copious, from the grave to the florid, with equal genius and judgment. These beauties were extremely heightened and recommended by a most harmonious voice, which a very becoming modesty rendered still more pleasing. A confusion and concern in the countenance of a speaker throws a grace upon all he utters; for there is a certain decent timidity, which, I know not how, is infinitely more engaging than the assured and self-sufficient air of confidence. I might mention several other circumstances to his advantage, which I am the more inclined to take notice of, as they are most striking in a person of his age, and most uncommon in a youth of his quality; but not to enter into a farther detail of his merit, I will only tell you, that when he had finished his poem, I embraced him with the utmost complacency; and being persuaded that nothing is a greater encouragement

than applause, I exhorted him to persevere in the paths he had entered, and to shine out to posterity with the same glorious lustre which reflected from his ancestors to himself. I congratulated his excellent mother, and his brother, who gained as much honour by the generous affection he discovered upon this occasion, as Calpurnius did by his eloquence, so remarkable a concern he shewed for him when he began to recite his poem, and so much pleasure in his success. May the gods grant me frequent occasions of giving you accounts of this nature ! for I have a partiality to the age in which I live, and should rejoice to find it not barren of merit. To this end I ardently wish our young men of quality would not derive all their glory from the images of their ancestors*. As for those which are placed in the house of these excellent youths, I now figure them to myself as silently applauding and encouraging their pursuits, and (what is a sufficient degree of honour to them both) as owning and confessing them to be their kindred. Farewell.

LETTER L.

To Servianus.

I AM extremely rejoiced to hear that you design your daughter for Fuscus Salinator, and congratulate you upon it. His family is patrician†, and both his father and mother are persons of the most exalted merit. As for himself, he is studious, learned, and eloquent, and with all the innocence of a child, unites the sprightliness of youth to the wisdom of age. I am not, believe me, deceived by my affection, when I give him this character ; for though I love him, I confess, beyond measure (as his friendship and esteem for me well deserve), yet partiality has no share in my judgment ; on the contrary, the stronger my fondness of him is, the more rigorously I weigh his

* None had the right of using family pictures or statues, but those whose ancestors or themselves had borne some of the highest dignities. So that the *jus imaginis* was much the same thing among the Romans, as the right of bearing a coat of arms among us.

† Those families were styled Patrician, whose ancestors had been members of the senate in the earliest times of the regal or consular government.

merit. I will venture then to assure you (and I speak it upon my own experience) you could not have formed to your wish a more accomplished son-in-law. May he soon present you with a grandson, who shall be the exact copy of his father ! And with what pleasure shall I receive from the arms of two such friends their children or grandchildren, whom I shall claim a sort of right to embrace as my own ! Farewell.

LETTER LI.

To Quintilian.

THOUGH your desires, I know, are extremely moderate, and the education which your daughter has received is suitable to your character, and that of Tutilius her grandfather ; yet as she is going to be married to a person, of so great distinction as Nonius Celer, whose station requires a certain splendour of living, it will be necessary to consider the rank of her husband in her clothes and equipage ; circumstances which, though they do not augment our real dignity, yet certainly adorn and grace it. But as I am sensible your fortune is not equal to the greatness of your mind, I claim to myself a part in your expense, and like another father, present the young lady with fifty thousand sesterces‡. The sum should be larger, but that I am well persuaded the smallness of the present is the only consideration that can prevail with your modesty not to refuse it. Farewell.

LETTER LII.

To Restitutus.

THIS obstinate distemper which hangs upon you greatly alarms me : and though I know how extremely temperate you are, yet I am afraid your disease should get the better of your moderation. Let me intreat you then to resist it with a determined abstemiousness : a remedy, be assured, of all others the most noble as well as the most salutary. There is nothing impracticable in what I recommend : it is a rule, at least, which I always direct my family to observe with respect to myself. I hope, I tell them, that should I be attacked with any disorder, I shall desire

‡ About 400*l.* of our money.

nothing of which I either ought to be ashamed, or have reason to repent: however, if my distemper should prevail over my resolution, I forbid that any thing be given me but by the consent of my physicians; and I assure the people about me, that I shall resent their compliance with me in things improper, as much as another man would their refusal. I had once a most violent fever; when the fit was a little abated, and I had been anointed*, my physician offered me something to drink; I desired he would first feel my pulse, and upon his seeming to think the fit was not quite off, I instantly returned the cup, though it was just at my lips. Afterwards, when I was preparing to go into the bath, twenty days from the first attack of my illness, perceiving the physicians whispering together, I enquired what they were saying. They replied, they were of opinion I might possibly bathe with safety, however, that they were not without some suspicion of hazard. What occasion is there, said I, of doing it at all? And thus, with great complacency, I gave up a pleasure I was upon the point of enjoying, and abstained from the bath with the same composure I was going to enter it. I mention this not only in order to enforce my advice by example, but also that this letter may be a sort of tie upon me to persevere in the same resolute abstinence for the future. Farewell.

LETTER LIII.

To Præsens.

ARE you determined then to pass your whole time between Lucania† and Campania‡? Your answer, I suppose, will be, that the former is your native country; and the latter that of your wife. This, I admit, may justify a long absence, but I cannot allow it as a reason for a perpetual one. But are you resolved in good earnest never to return to Rome, that theatre of dignities, preferment, and society of every sort? Are you obstinately bent to live your own

* Unction was much esteemed and prescribed by the ancients. Celsus, who flourished, it is supposed, about this time, expressly recommends it in the remission of acute distempers.

† Comprehending the Basilicata, a province in the kingdom of Naples.

‡ Now called Campagna di Roma.

master, and sleep and rise when you think proper? Will you never change your country dress for the habit of the town, but spend your whole days unembarrassed by business? It is time, however, you should revisit our scene of hurry, were it only that your rural pleasures may not grow languid by enjoyment; appear at the levees of the great, that you may enjoy the same honour yourself with more satisfaction; and mix in our crowd, that you may have a stronger relish for the charms of solitude. But am I not imprudently retarding the friend I would recal? It is these very circumstances, perhaps, that induce you every day more and more to wrap yourself up in retirement. All, however, I mean to persuade you to, is only to intermit, not renounce your repose. If I were to invite you to a feast, as I would blend dishes of a sharper taste with those of a more luscious kind, in order to raise the edge of your palate by the one, which has been flattened by the other; so I now advise you to enliven the smooth pleasures of life with those of a quicker relish. Farewell.

LETTER LIV.

To Calphurnia §.

IT is incredible how impatiently I wish for your return; such is the tenderness of my affection for you, and so unaccustomed am I to a separation! I lie awake the greatest part of the night in thinking of you, and (to use a very common, but very true expression) my feet carry me of their own accord to your apartment at those hours I used to visit you; but not finding you there, I return with as much sorrow and disappointment as an excluded lover. The only intermission my anxiety knows, is when I am engaged at the bar, and in the causes of my friends. Judge how wretched must his life be, who finds no repose but in business, no consolation but in a crowd. Farewell.

LETTER LV.

To Tusculum.

You desire my sentiments concerning the method of study you should pursue, in that retirement to which you have

§ His wife.

long since withdrawn. In the first place, then, I look upon it as a very advantageous practice (and it is what many recommend) to translate either from Greek into Latin, or from Latin into Greek. By this means you will furnish yourself with noble and proper expressions, with variety of beautiful figures, and an ease and strength of style. Besides, by imitating the most approved authors, you will find your imagination heated, and fall insensibly into a similar turn of thought, at the same time that those things which you may possibly have overlooked in a common way of reading, cannot escape you in translating; and this method will open your understanding and improve your judgment. It may not be amiss, after you have read an author, in order to make yourself master of his subject and argument, from his reader to turn, as it were, his rival, and attempt something of your own in the same way; and then make an impartial comparison between your performance and his, in order to see in what point either you or he most happily succeeded. It will be a matter of very pleasing congratulation to yourself, if you should find in some things that you have the advantage of him, as it will be a great mortification if he should rise above you in all. You may sometimes venture in these little essays to try your strength upon the most shining passages of a distinguished author. The attempt, indeed, will be something bold; but as it is a contention which passes in secret, it cannot be taxed with presumption. Not but that we have seen instances of persons, who have publicly entered this sort of lists with great success, and while they did not despair of overtaking, have gloriously advanced before those whom they thought it sufficient honour to follow. After you have thus finished a composition, you may lay it aside, till it is no longer fresh in your memory, and then take it up in order to revise and correct it. You will find several things to retain, but still more to reject; you will add a new thought here, and alter another there. It is a laborious and tedious task, I own, thus to re-inflame the mind after the first heat is over, to recover an impulse when its force has been checked and spent; in a word, to interweave new parts into the texture of a composition with-

out disturbing or confounding the original plan; but the advantage attending this method will overbalance the difficulty. I know the bent of your present attention is directed towards the eloquence of the bar; but I would not for that reason advise you never to quit the style of dispute and contention. As land is improved by sowing it with various seeds, so is the mind by exercising it with different studies. I would recommend it to you, therefore, sometimes to single out a fine passage of history; sometimes to exercise yourself in the epistolary style, and sometimes the poetical. For it frequently happens, that in pleading one has occasion to make use not only of historical, but even poetical descriptions; as by the epistolary manner of writing you will acquire a close and easy expression. It will be extremely proper also to unbend your mind with poetry; when I say so, I do not mean that species of it which turns upon subjects of great length (for that is fit only for persons of much leisure), but those little pieces of the epigrammatic kind, which serve as proper reliefs to, and are consistent with employments of every sort. They commonly go under the title of Poetical Amusements; but these amusements have sometimes gained as much reputation to their authors, as works of a more serious nature. In this manner the greatest men, as well as the greatest orators, used either to exercise or amuse themselves, or rather indeed did both. It is surprising how much the mind is entertained and enlivened by these little poetical compositions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, politeness, and every thing, in short, that concerns life and the affairs of the world. Besides, the same advantage attends these, as every other sort of poems, that we turn from them to prose with so much the more pleasure, after having experienced the difficulty of being constrained and fettered by numbers. And now, perhaps, I have troubled you upon this subject longer than you desired; however, there is one thing which I have omitted, I have not told you what kind of authors you should read, though indeed that was sufficiently implied when I mentioned what subjects I would recommend for your compositions. You will

remember, that the most approved writers of each sort are to be carefully chosen; for, as it has been well observed, "though we should read much, we should not read many books*." Who those authors are is so clearly settled, and so generally known, that I need not point them out to you: besides, I have already extended this letter to such an immoderate length, that I have interrupted, I fear, too long those studies I have been recommending. I will here resign you therefore to your papers, which you will now resume: and either pursue the studies you were before engaged in, or enter upon some of those which I have advised. Farewell.

LETTER LVI.

To Priscus.

I AM deeply affected at the ill state of health of my friend Fannia, which she contracted during her attendance on Junia, one of the Vestal virgins. She engaged in this good office at first voluntarily, Junia being her relation; as she was afterwards appointed to do it by an order from the college of priests: for these virgins, when any indisposition makes it necessary to remove them from the temple of Vesta, are always delivered

* Thus the noble and polite moralist, speaking of the influence which our reading has upon our taste and manners, thinks it improper "to call a man well read, who reads many authors; since he must of necessity have more ill models than good; and be more stuffed with bombast, ill fancy, and wry thought, than filled with solid sense and just imagination." [Character. v. 1. 142.] When the Goths overran Greece, the libraries escaped their destruction, by a notion which some of their leaders industriously propagated among them, that it would be more for their interest to leave those spoils untouched to their enemies; as being proper to enervate their minds, and amuse them with vain and idle speculations. Truth, perhaps, has been less a gainer by this multiplicity of books, than error: and it may be a question, whether the excellent models which have been delivered down to us from antiquity, together with those few which modern times have produced, by any means balance the immoderate weight which must be thrown into the opposite scale of writers. The truth is, though we may be learned by other men's reflections, wise we can only be by our own: and the maxim here recommended by Pliny would well deserve the attention of the studious, though no other inconvenience attended the reading of many books, than that which Sir William Temple apprehends from it; the lessening the force and growth of a man's own genius.

to the care and custody of some venerable matron. It was her assiduity in the execution of this charge that occasioned her present disorder, which is a continual fever, attended with a cough that increases daily. She is extremely emaciated, and seems in a total decay of every thing but spirits; those indeed she preserves in their full vigour; and in a manner worthy the wife of Helvidius, and the daughter of Thrasea. In all the rest she is so greatly impaired, that I am more than apprehensive upon her account; I am deeply afflicted. I grieve, my friend, that so excellent a woman is going to be removed from the eyes of the world, which will never, perhaps, again behold her equal. How consummate is her virtue, her piety, her wisdom, her courage! She twice followed her husband into exile, and once was banished herself upon his account. For Senecio, when he was tried for writing the life of Helvidius, having said in his defence that he composed that work at the request of Fannia; Metius Carus, with a stern and threatening air, asked her whether it was true? She acknowledged it was: and when her father questioned her, whether she supplied him likewise with materials for that purpose, and whether her mother was privy to that transaction? she boldly confessed the former, but absolutely denied the latter. In short, throughout her whole examination not a word escaped her that betrayed the least emotion of fear. On the contrary, she had the courage to preserve a copy of those very books, which the senate, overawed by the tyranny of the times, had ordered to be suppressed, and at the same time the effects of the author to be confiscated; and took with her as the companions of her exile, what had been the cause of it. How pleasing is her conversation, how polite her address, and (which seldom unites in the same character) how venerable is she as well as amiable! She will hereafter, I am well persuaded, be pointed out as a model to all wives; and perhaps be esteemed worthy to be set forth as an example of fortitude even to our sex; since, while yet we have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with her, we contemplate her with the same admiration as those heroines who are celebrated in ancient history. For myself, I confess I cannot but tremble for this

illustrious house, which seems shaken to its very foundations, and ready to fall into ruins with her: for though she will leave descendants behind her, yet what a height of virtue must they attain, what glorious actions must they perform, ere the world will be persuaded that this excellent woman was not the last of her family! It is an aggravating circumstance of affliction to me, that by her death I seem to lose a second time her mother; that worthy mother (and what can I say higher in her praise?) of so amiable a person! who, as she was restored to me in her daughter, so she will now again be taken from me, and the loss of Fannia will thus pierce my heart at once with a fresh stab, and at the same time tear open a former wound. I loved and honoured them both so highly, that I knew not which had the greatest share of my esteem and affection; a point they desired might ever remain undetermined. In their prosperity and their adversity I did them every good office in my power, and was their comforter in exile, as well as their avenger at their return. But I have not yet paid them what I owe, and am so much the more solicitous for the recovery of this lady, that I may have time to acquit what is due from me to her. Such is the anxiety under which I write this letter! But if some friendly power should happily give me occasion to exchange it for sentiments of joy, I shall not complain of the alarms I now suffer. Farewell.

LETTER LVII.

To Rufus.

WHAT numbers of learned men does modesty conceal, or love of ease withdraw from the notice of the world! and yet when we are going to speak or recite in public, it is the judgment only of ostentatious talents which we stand in awe of: whereas in truth, those who silently cultivate the sciences have so much a higher claim to regard, as they pay a calm veneration to whatever is great in works of genius: an observation which I give you upon experience. Terentius Junior, having passed through the military offices suitable to a person of equestrian rank, and executed with great integrity the post of receiver-general of the revenues in Narbonensian

Gaul*, retired to his estate, preferring the enjoyment of an uninterrupted tranquillity, to those honours which his services had merited. He invited me lately to his house, where, looking upon him only as a worthy master of a family, and an industrious farmer, I started such topics of conversation in which I imagined he was most versed. But he soon turned the discourse, and with a great fund of knowledge entered upon points of literature. With what elegance did he express himself in Latin and Greek; for he is so perfectly well skilled in both, that whichever he uses, seems to be the language wherein he particularly excels. How extensive is his reading! how tenacious his memory! You would not imagine him the inhabitant of a country village, but of polite Athens herself. In short, his conversation has increased my solicitude concerning my works, and taught me to fear the judgment of those refined country gentlemen, as much as of those of more known and conspicuous learning. And let me persuade you to consider them in the same light: for, believe me, upon a careful observation, you will often find in the literary as well as military world, most formidable abilities concealed under a very unpromising appearance. Farewell.

LETTER LVIII.

To Maximus.

THE lingering disorder of a friend of mine gave me occasion lately to reflect that we are never so virtuous as when oppressed with sickness. Where is the man who under the pain of any distemper is either solicited by avarice or inflamed with lust? At such a season he is neither a slave of love, nor the fool of ambition: he looks with indifference upon the charms of wealth, and is contented with ever so small a portion of it, as being upon the point of leaving even that little. It is then he recollects there are gods, and that he himself is but a man: no mortal is then the object of his envy, his admiration, or his con-

* One of the four principal divisions of ancient Gaul; it extended from the Pyrenean mountains, which separate France from Spain, to the Alps, which divide it from Italy, and comprehended Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiny, and Savoy.

tempt: and the reports of slander neither raise his attention nor feed his curiosity: his imagination is wholly employed upon baths and fountains*. These are the subjects of his cares and wishes, while he resolves, if he should recover, to pass the remainder of his days in ease and tranquillity, -that is, in innocence and happiness. I may therefore lay down to you and myself a short rule, which the philosophers have endeavoured to inculcate at the expense of many words, and even many volumes; that "we should practise in health those resolutions we form in sickness." Farewell.

LETTER LIX.

To Genitor.

I AM extremely concerned that you have lost your pupil, a youth, as your letter assures me, of such great hopes. Can I want to be informed, that his sickness and death must have interrupted your studies, knowing, as I do, with what exactness you fill up every duty of life, and how unlimited your affection is to all those to whom you give your esteem? As for myself, business pursues me even hither, and I am not out of the reach of people who oblige me to act either as their judge or their arbitrator. To this I must add, not only the continual complaints of the farmers, who claim a sort of prescription to try my patience as they please; but the necessity of letting out my farms: an affair which gives me much trouble, as it is exceedingly difficult to find out proper tenants. For these reasons I can only study by snatches; still, however, I study. I sometimes read, and sometimes I compose; but my reading teaches me, by a very mortifying comparison, with what ill success I attempt to be an author myself. Though indeed you give me great encouragement, when you compare the piece I wrote in vindication of Helvidius, to the oration of Demosthenes against Midias. I confess I had that harangue in my view when I composed mine; not that I pretend to rival it (that would be an absurd and mad at-

tempt indeed), but I endeavoured, I own, to imitate it, as far as the difference of our subjects would admit, and as nearly as a genius of the lowest rank can copy one of the highest. Farewell.

LETTER LX.

To Geminus.

OUR friend Macrinus is pierced with the severest affliction. He has lost his wife! a lady whose uncommon virtues would have rendered her an ornament even to ancient times. He lived with her thirty-nine years in the most uninterrupted harmony. How respectful was her behaviour to him! and how did she herself deserve the highest veneration, as she blended and united in her character all those amiable virtues that adorn and distinguish the different periods of female life! It should, methinks, afford great consolation to Macrinus, that he has thus long enjoyed so exquisite a blessing; but that reflection seems only so much the more to im-bitter his loss; as indeed the pain of parting with our happiness still rises in proportion to the length of its continuance. I cannot therefore but be greatly anxious for so valuable a friend, till this wound to his peace shall be in a condition to admit of proper applications. Time, however, together with the necessity of the thing, and even a satiety of grief itself, will best effect his cure. Farewell.

LETTER LXI.

To Romanus.

HAVE you ever seen the source of the river Clitumnus†? as I never heard you mention it, I imagine not; let me therefore advise you to do so immediately. It is but lately indeed I had that pleasure, and I condemn myself for not having seen it sooner. At the foot of a little hill, covered with venerable and shady cypress-trees, a spring

* It is probable that fevers were the peculiar distemper of Rome, as Pliny, in his general allusions to disorders of the body, seems always to consider them of the inflammatory kind.

† Now called Clitumno: it rises a little below the village of Campello in Umbria. The inhabitants near this river still retain a notion that its waters are attended with a supernatural property, imagining it makes the cattle white that drink of it: a quality for which it is likewise celebrated by many of the Latin poets. See Addison's Travels.

issues out, which, gushing in different and unequal streams, forms itself, after several windings, into a spacious bason, so extremely clear that you may see the pebbles and the little pieces of money which are thrown into it*, as they lie at the bottom. From thence it is carried off not so much by the declivity of the ground, as by its own strength and fulness. It is navigable almost as soon as it has quitted its source, and wide enough to admit a free passage for vessels to pass by each other, as they sail with or against the stream. The current runs so strong, though the ground is level, that the large barges which go down the river have no occasion to make use of their oars; while those which ascend find it difficult to advance, even with the assistance of oars and poles; and this vicissitude of labour and ease is exceedingly amusing when one sails up and down merely for pleasure. The banks on each side are shaded with the verdure of great numbers of ash and poplar trees, as clearly and distinctly seen in the stream, as if they were actually sunk in it. The water is cold as snow, and as white too. Near it stands an ancient and venerable temple, wherein is placed the river-god Clitumnus, clothed in a robe, whose immediate presence the prophetic oracles here delivered sufficiently testify. Several little chapels are scattered round, dedicated to particular gods, distinguished by different names, and some of them too presiding over different fountains. For, besides the principal one, which is as it were the parent of all the rest, there are several other lesser streams, which, taking their rise from various sources, lose themselves in the river: over which a bridge is built, that separates the sacred

* The heads of considerable rivers, hot springs, large bodies of standing water, &c. were esteemed holy among the Romans, and cultivated with religious ceremonies. "Magnum fluminum," says Seneca, "capita reveremur; subita et ex abdito vasti amnis eruptio aras habet; coluntur aquarum calentium fontes, et stagna quædam, vel opacitas, vel immensa altitudo sacrauit." Ep. 41. It was customary to throw little pieces of money into those fountains, lakes, &c., which had the reputation of being sacred, as a mark of veneration for those places, and to render the presiding deities propitious. Suetonius mentions this practice in the annual vows which he says the Roman people made for the health of Augustus.

part from that which lies open to common use. Vessels are allowed to come above this bridge, but no person is permitted to swim except below it†. The *Hispalletes*‡, to whom Augustus gave this place, furnish a public bath, and likewise entertain all strangers at their own expense. Several villas, attracted by the beauty of this river, are situated upon its borders. In short, every object that presents itself will afford you entertainment. You may also amuse yourself with numberless inscriptions, that are fixed upon the pillars and walls by different persons, celebrating the virtues of the fountain, and the divinity that presides over it. There are many of them you will greatly admire, as there are some that will make you laugh; but I must correct myself when I say so: you are too humane, I know, to laugh upon such an occasion. Farewell.

LETTER LXII.

To Ursus.

It is long since I have taken either a book or pen in my hand. It is long since I have known the sweets of leisure and repose; since I have known, in short, that indolent, but agreeable situation of doing nothing, and being nothing; so much have the affairs of my friends engaged me, and prevented me from enjoying the pleasures of retirement and contemplation. There is no sort of studies, however, of consequence enough to supersede the duty of friendship: on the contrary, it is a sacred tie which they themselves teach us most religiously to preserve. Farewell.

LETTER LXIII.

To Fabatus§.

YOUR concern to hear of my wife's miscarriage will be equal, I know, to the earnest desire you have that we should make you a great-grandfather. The inexperience of her youth rendered her ignorant that she was breeding; so that she not only neglected the proper precautions, but managed herself in a

† The touch of a naked body was thought to pollute these consecrated waters, as appears from a passage in Tacitus, l. 14. an. c. 22.

‡ Inhabitants of a town in Umbria, now called Spello.

§ His wife's grandfather.

way extremely unsuitable to a person in her circumstances. But she has severely atoned for her mistake by the utmost hazard of her life. Though you should (as most certainly you will) be afflicted to see yourself thus disappointed in your old age, of the immediate hopes of leaving a family behind you; yet it deserves your gratitude to the gods, that in the preservation of your grand-daughter, you have still reason to expect that blessing; an expectation so much the more certain, as she has given this proof, though an unhappy one indeed, of her being capable of bearing children. These, at least, are the reflections by which I endeavour to confirm my own hopes, and comfort myself under my present disappointment. You cannot more ardently wish to have great-grandchildren than I do to have children, as the dignity of both our families seems to open to them a sure road to honours, and we shall leave them the glory of descending from a long race of ancestors, whose fame is as extensive as their nobility is ancient. May we but have the pleasure of seeing them born, it will make us amends for the present disappointment. Farewell.

LETTER LXIV.

To Hispulla.*

WHEN I consider that you love your niece even more tenderly than if she were your own daughter, I ought in the first place to inform you of her recovery before I tell you she has been ill; that the sentiments of joy at the one may leave you no leisure to be afflicted at the other; though I fear indeed, after your first transports of gratulation are over, you will feel some concern, and in the midst of your joy for the danger she has escaped, will tremble at the thought of that which she has undergone. She is now, however, in good spirits, and again restored to herself and to me, as she is making the same progress in the recovery of her strength and health that she did in the loss of them. To say the truth (and I may now safely tell it you), she was in the utmost hazard of her life; not indeed from any fault of her own, but a little from the inexperience of her

youth. To this must be imputed the cause of her miscarriage, and the sad experience she has had of the consequence of not knowing she was breeding. But though this misfortune has deprived you of the consolation of a nephew, or niece, to supply the loss of your brother; you must remember that blessing seems rather to be deferred than denied, since her life is preserved from whom that happiness is to be expected. I entreat you then to represent this accident to your father† in the most favourable light: as your sex are the best advocates in cases of this kind. Farewell.

LETTER LXV.

To Minutianus.

I BEG you would excuse me this one day: Titinius Capito is to recite a performance of his, and I know not whether it is most my inclination or my duty to attend him. He is a man of a most amiable disposition, and justly to be numbered among the brightest ornaments of our age: he studiously cultivates the polite arts himself, and generously admires and encourages them in others. To several who have distinguished themselves by their compositions, he has been the defence, the refuge, and the reward; as he affords a glorious model and example to all in general. In a word, he is the restorer and reformer of learning, now, alas! well nigh grown obsolete and decayed. His house is open to every man of genius who has any works to rehearse; and it is not there alone that he attends these assemblies with the most obliging good-nature. I am sure, at least, he never once excused himself from mine, if he happened to be at Rome. I should therefore with a more than ordinary ill grace refuse to return him the same favour, as the occasion of doing it is peculiarly glorious. Should not I think myself obliged to a man, who, if I were engaged in any law-suit, generously attended the cause in which I was interested? And am I less indebted, now that my whole care and business is of the literary kind, for his assiduity in my concerns of this sort? A point which, if not the only, is however the principal in-

* His wife's aunt.

† Fabatus, grandfather to Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

stance wherein I can be obliged. But though I owed him no return of this nature; though I were not engaged to him by the reciprocal tie of the same good offices he has done me; yet not only the beauty of his extensive genius, as polite as it is severely correct, but the dignity of his subject would strongly incite me to be of his audience. He has written an account of the deaths of several illustrious persons, some of which were my particular friends. It is a pious office then, it should seem, as I could not be present at their obsequies, to attend, at least, this (as I may call it) their funeral oration; which, though a late, is, however, for that reason, a more unsuspected tribute to their memories. Farewell.

LETTER LXVI.

To Sabinianus.

YOUR freed-man, whom you lately mentioned to me with displeasure, has been with me, and threw himself at my feet with as much submission as he could have done at yours. He earnestly requested me with many tears, and even with all the eloquence of silent sorrow, to intercede for him; in short, he convinced me by his whole behaviour, that he sincerely repents of his fault. And I am persuaded he is thoroughly reformed, because he seems entirely sensible of his guilt. I know you are angry with him, and I know too it is not without reason; but clemency can never exert itself with more applause, than when there is the justest cause for resentment. You once had an affection for this man, and, I hope, will have again: in the mean while, let me only prevail with you to pardon him. If he should incur your displeasure hereafter, you will have so much the stronger plea in excuse for your anger, as you shew yourself more exorable to him now. Allow something to his youth, to his tears, and to your own natural mildness of temper: do not make him uneasy any longer, and I will add too, do not make yourself so: for a man of your benevolence of heart cannot be angry without feeling great regret. I am afraid, were I to join my intreaties with his, I should seem rather to compel, than request you to forgive him. Yet I will not scruple

to do it: and in so much the stronger terms, as I have very sharply and severely reproved him, positively threatening never to interpose again in his behalf. But though it was proper to say this to him, in order to make him more fearful of offending, I do not say so to you. I may, perhaps, again have occasion to intreat you upon his account, and again obtain your forgiveness; supposing, I mean, his error should be such as may become me to intercede for, and you to pardon. Farewell.

LETTER LXVII.

To the same.

I GREATLY approve of your having, in compliance with my letter, received again into your family and favour, a freed-man, whom you once admitted into a share of your affection. It will afford you, I doubt not, great satisfaction. It certainly, at least, has me, both as it is a proof that you are capable of being governed in your passion, and as it is an instance of your paying so much regard to me, as either to yield to my authority, or to comply with my request. You will accept, therefore, at once, both of my applause and my thanks. At the same time I must advise you to be disposed for the future to pardon the errors of your people, though there should be none to interpose in their behalf. Farewell.

LETTER LXVIII.

To Fuscus.

YOU desire to know in what manner I dispose of my time in my summer villa at Tuscum. I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun; sometimes indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up, I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber-windows closed, as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate attention, I am left to my own thoughts; nor suffer my mind to wander with my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind, which, when they are not distracted by a multiplicity of external objects, see nothing but what the imagination represents to them.

If I have any composition upon my hands, this is the time I choose to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I settle and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner I compose more or less as the subject is more or less difficult, and I find myself able to retain it. Then I call my secretary, and, opening the shutters, I dictate to him what I have composed, after which I dismiss him for a little while, and then call him in again. About ten or eleven of the clock (for I do not observe one fixed hour), according as the weather proves, I either walk upon my terrace, or in the covered portico, and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I am engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study; and find this changing of the scene preserves and enlivens my attention. At my return home, I repose myself; then I take a walk; and after that, repeat aloud some Greek or Latin oration, not so much for the sake of strengthening my elocution, as my digestion; though indeed the voice at the same time finds its account in this practice. Then I walk again, am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife or a few friends with me, some author is read to us; and after supper we are entertained either with music or an interlude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my family, in the number of which I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in various conversation; and the day, even when it is at the longest, steals away imperceptibly. Upon some occasions, I change the order in certain of the articles above-mentioned. For instance, if I have

studied longer or walked more than usual, after my second sleep and reading an oration or two aloud, instead of using my chariot I get on horseback; by which means I take as much exercise and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring villages claim some part of the day; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the field, that though I should not meet with game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time too (though not so much as they desire) is allotted to my tenants; and I find their rustic complaints give a zest to my studies and engagements of the politer kind. Farewell.

LETTER LXIX.

To the same.

You are much pleased, I find, with the account I gave you in my former letter, of the manner in which I spend the summer season at Tuscum; and desire to know what alteration I make in my method, when I am at Laurentinum in the winter. None at all, except abridging myself of my sleep at noon, and employing part of the night in study: and if any cause requires my attendance at Rome (which in winter very frequently happens), instead of having interludes or music after supper, I meditate upon what I have dictated, and by often revising it in my own mind, fix it in my memory. Thus I have given you my scheme of life in summer, and winter; to which you may add the intermediate seasons of spring and autumn. As at those times I lose nothing of the day, so I study but little in the night. Farewell.

BOOK THE SECOND.

MODERN AND MISCELLANEOUS, OF EARLY DATE.

SECTION I.

LETTER I.

Queen Anne Bullen to King Henry.

Sir,

YOUR grace's displeasure and my imprisonment are things so strange unto me, as what to write, or what to excuse, I am altogether ignorant. Whereas you send unto me (willing me to confess a truth, and so obtain your favour) by such an one whom you know to be mine ancient professed enemy, I no sooner received this message by him, than I rightly conceived your meaning; and if, as you say, confessing a truth, indeed, may procure my safety, I shall, with all willing and duty, perform your command.

But let not your grace ever imagine, that your poor wife will ever be brought to acknowledge a fault, where not so much as a thought thereof preceded. And, to speak a truth, never prince had wife more loyal in all duty, and in all true affection, than you have ever found in Anne Bullen; with which name and place I could willingly have contented myself, if God and your grace's pleasure had been so pleased. Neither did I at any time so far forget myself in my exaltation, or received queenship, but that I always looked for such an alteration as now I find; for the ground of my preferment being on no surer foundation than your grace's fancy, the least alter-

ation, I know, was fit and sufficient to draw that fancy to some other subject. You have chosen me from a low estate to be your queen and companion, far beyond my desert and desire. If then you found me worthy of such honour, good your grace let not any light fancy, or bad counsel of mine enemies, withdraw your princely favour from me; neither let that stain, that unworthy stain, of a disloyal heart towards your good grace, ever cast so foul a blot on your most dutiful wife, and the infant princess, your daughter. Try me, good king, but let me have a lawful trial; and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and judges; yea, let me receive an open trial (for my truth shall fear no open shame); then shall you see either mine innocence cleared, your suspicion and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped, or my guilt openly declared. So that whatsoever God or you may determine of me, your grace may be freed from an open censure, and mine offence being so lawfully proved, your grace is at liberty, both before God and man, not only to execute worthy punishment on me, as an unlawful wife, but to follow your affection, already settled on that party, for whose sake I am now as I am, whose name I could some good while since have pointed unto your grace, being not ignorant of my suspicion therein. But if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death, but an infamous slander

must bring you the enjoying of your desired happiness, then I desire of God that he will pardon your great sin therein, and likewise mine enemies the instruments thereof: and that he will not call you to a strict account for your unprincipely and cruel usage of me, at his general judgment-seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear, and in whose judgment, I doubt not (whatsoever the world may think of me), mine innocence shall be openly known and sufficiently cleared. My last and only request shall be, that myself may only bear the burthen of your grace's displeasure, and that it may not touch the innocent souls of those poor gentlemen, who, as I understand, are likewise in strait imprisonment for my sake. If ever I found favour in your sight, if ever the name of Anne Bullen hath been pleasing in your ears, then let me obtain this request; and I will so leave to trouble your grace any farther, with my earnest prayers to the Trinity to have your grace in his good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions. From my doleful prison in the Tower, the 6th of May. Your most loyal and ever faithful wife.

LETTER II.

A Letter from Lady More to Mr. Secretary Cromwell.

RIGHT honourable and my especial good master secretary: in my most humble wise I recommend me unto your good mastership, acknowledging myself to be most deeply bound to your good mastership for your manifold goodness and loving favour, both before this time and yet daily, now also shewn towards my poor husband and me. I pray Almighty God continue your goodness so still, for thereupon hangeth the greatest part of my poor husband's comfort and mine. The cause of my writing at this time is to certify your especial good mastership of my great and extreme necessity; which, on and besides the charge of mine own house, do pay weekly fifteen shillings for the board wages of my poor husband and his servant; for the maintaining whereof I have been compelled, of very necessity, to sell part of my apparel, for lack of other substance to make money of. Wherefore my most

humble petition and suit to your mastership at this time is, to desire your mastership's favourable advice and counsel, whether I may be so bold to attend upon the king's most gracious highness. I trust there is no doubt in the cause of my impediment; for the young man being a ploughman, had been diseased with the ague by the space of three years before that he departed. And besides this, it is now five weeks since he departed, and no other person diseased in the house since that time; wherefore I most humbly beseech your especial good mastership (as my only trust is, and else know not what to do, but utterly in this world to be undone) for the love of God to consider the premises, and thereupon, of your most abundant goodness, to shew your most favourable help to the comforting of my poor husband and me, in this our great heaviness, extreme age, and necessity. And thus we and all ours shall daily, during our lives, pray to God for the prosperous success of your right honourable dignity. By your poor continual oratrix.

LETTER III.

Lady Stafford to Mr. Secretary Cromwell.

MASTER secretary, after my poor recommendations, which are little to be regarded of me that am a poor banished creature, this shall be to desire you to be good to my poor husband and to me. I am sure it is not unknown to you the high displeasure that both he and I have both of the king's highness and the queen's grace, by the reason of our marriage without their knowledge, wherein we both do yield ourselves faulty, and do acknowledge that we did not well to be so hasty or so bold without their knowledge. But one thing, good master secretary, consider, that he was young, and love overcame reason; and for my part, I saw so much honesty in him that I loved him as well as he did me, and was in bondage, and glad I was to be at liberty: so that for my part, I saw that all the world did set so little by me, and he so much, that I thought I could take no better way but to take him and to forsake all other ways, and live a poor honest life with him; and

so I do put no doubts but we should, if we might once be so happy to recover the king's gracious favour and the queen's. For well I might have had a greater man of birth, and a higher; but I assure you I could never have had one that should have loved me so well, nor a more honest man. And besides that, he is both come of an ancient stock, and again as meet (if it was his grace's pleasure) to do the king service as any young gentleman in his court. Therefore, good master secretary, this shall be my suit to you, that for the love that well I know you do bear to all my blood, though for my part I have not deserved it but little, by the reason of my vile conditions, as to put my husband to the king's grace, that he may do his duty as all other gentlemen do. And, good master secretary, sue for us to the king's highness, and beseech his highness, which ever was wont to take pity, to have pity on us: and that it would please his grace of his goodness, to speak to the queen's grace for us; for as far as I can perceive, her grace is so highly displeased with us both, that without the king be so good lord to us as to withdraw his rigour and sue for us, we are never like to recover her grace's favour, which is too heavy to bear. And seeing there is no remedy, for God's sake help us, for we have been now a quarter of a year married, I thank God, and too late now to call that again: wherefore there is the more need to help. But if I were at my liberty, and might choose, I assure you, master secretary, for my little time, I have tried so much honesty to be in him, that I would rather beg my bread with him than to be the greatest queen christened; and I believe verily he is in the same case with me, for I believe verily he would not forsake me to be a king; therefore, good master secretary, being we are so well together, and do intend to live so honest a life, though it be but poor, shew part of your goodness to us, as well as you do to all the world besides; for I promise you ye have the name to help all them that have need; and amongst all your suitors, I dare be bold to say that you have no matter more to be pitied than ours; and therefore for God's sake be good to us, for in you is all our trust; and I beseech you, good master secretary, pray my lord my father, and my lady, to be

good to us, and to let me have their blessings, and my husband their good will, and I will never desire more of them. Also I pray you desire my lord of Norfolk, and my lord my brother to be good to us; I dare not write to them, they are so cruel against us; but if with any pain that I could take with my life, I might win their good wills, I promise you there is no child living would venture more than I; and so I pray you to report by me, and you shall find my writing true; and in all points which I may please them in, I shall be ready to obey them nearest my husband, whom I am most bound to, to whom I most heartily beseech you to be good unto, which for my sake is a poor banished man, for an honest and a godly cause; and being that I have read in old books that some for as just causes have by kings and queens been pardoned by the suit of good folks, I trust it shall be our chance, through your good help, to come to the same, as knoweth the God who sendeth you health and heart's ease. Scribbled with her ill hand, who is your poor humble suitor always to command.

LETTER IV.

Earl of Essex to Queen Elizabeth.

From a mind delighting in sorrow, from spirits wasted in passion, from a heart torn in pieces with care, grief, and travel, from a man that hateth himself and all things that keepeth him alive, what service can your majesty expect, since your service past deserves no more than banishment or prescription in the cursedest of all other countries? Nay, nay, it is your rebels' pride and success that must give me leave to ransom my life out of this hateful prison of my loathed body; which if it happen so, your majesty shall have no cause to mislike the fashion of my death, since the course of my life could never please you. Your majesty's exiled servant.

LETTER V.

Lord Chancellor Egerton to the Earl of Essex.

It is often seen, that he that stands by seeth more than he that playeth the game; and, for the most part, every one in his own cause standeth in his own light, and seeth not so clearly as he

should. Your lordship hath dealt in other men's causes, and in great and weighty affairs, with great wisdom and judgment; now your own is in hand, you are not to condemn or refuse the advice of any that love you, how simple soever. In this order I rank myself among others that love you, none more simple, and none that love you with more true and honest affection; which shall plead my excuse if you shall either mistake or mistrust my words or meaning. But, in your lordship's honourable wisdom, I neither doubt nor suspect the one nor the other. I will not presume to advise you, but shoot my bolt and tell you what I think. The beginning and long continuance of this so unseasonable discontentment you have seen and proved, by which you aim at the end; if you hold still this course, which hitherto you find to be worse and worse (and the longer you go the further you go out of the way), there is little hope or likelihood the end will be better: you are not yet gone so far but that you may well return: the return is safe, but the progress is dangerous and desperate in this course you hold. If you have any enemies, you do that for them which they could never do for themselves. Your friends you leave to scorn and contempt: you forsake yourself and overthrow your fortunes, and ruin your honour and reputation: you give that comfort and courage to the foreign enemies, as greater they cannot have; for what can be more welcome and pleasing news than to hear that her majesty and the realm are maimed of so worthy a member, who hath so often and so valiantly quelled and daunted them? You forsake your country when it hath most need of your counsel and aid; and, lastly, you fail in your indissoluble duty which you owe unto your most gracious sovereign, a duty imposed upon you not by nature and policy only, but by the religious and sacred bond wherein the divine majesty of Almighty God hath by the rule of Christianity obliged you.

For the four first, your constant resolution may perhaps move you to esteem them as light; but being well weighed, they are not light, nor lightly to be regarded. And for the four last, it may be that the clearness of your own conscience may seem to content yourself; but that is not enough; for these duties

stand not only in contemplation or inward meditation, and cannot be performed but by external actions, and where that faileth the substance also faileth. This being your present state and condition, what is to be done? What is the remedy, my good lord? I lack judgment and wisdom to advise you, but I will never want an honest true heart to wish you well; nor, being warranted by a good conscience, will fear to speak that I think. I have begun plainly, be not offended if I proceed so. *Bene credit qui cedit tempori*: and Seneca saith, *Cedendum est fortuna*. The medicine and remedy is not to contend and strive, but humbly to yield and submit. Have you given cause, and ye take a scandal unto you? then all you can do is too little to make satisfaction. Is cause of scandal given unto you? Yet policy, duty, and religion enforce you to sue, yield, and submit to our sovereign, between whom and you there can be no equal proportion of duty, where God requires it as a principal duty and care to himself, and when it is evident that great good may ensue of it to your friends, yourself, your country, and your sovereign, and extreme harm by the contrary. There can be no dishonour to yield; but in denying, dishonour and impiety. The difficulty, my good lord, is to conquer yourself, which is the height of true valour and fortitude, whereunto all your honourable actions have tended. Do it in this, and God will be pleased, her majesty (no doubt) well satisfied, your country will take good, and your friends comfort by it; and yourself (I mention you last, for that of all these you esteem yourself least) shall receive honour; and your enemies (if you have any) shall be disappointed of their bitter sweet hope.

I have delivered what I think simply and plainly: I leave you to determine according to your own wisdom. If I have erred, it is *error amoris*, and not *amor erroris*. Construe and accept it, I beseech you, as I meant it; not as an advice, but as an opinion to be allowed or cancelled at your pleasure. If I might conveniently have conferred with yourself in person, I would not have troubled you with so many idle blots. Whatsoever you judge of this my opinion, yet be assured my desire is to further all good means that may tend to your lordship's

good. And so wishing you all happiness and honour, I cease. Your lordship's most ready and faithful, though unable poor friend.

LETTER VI.

The Earl's Answer.

My very good lord, though there is not that man this day living whom I would sooner make judge of any question that might concern me than yourself; yet you must give me leave to tell you, that in some cases I must appeal from all earthly judges; and if in any, then surely in this, when the highest judge on earth hath imposed upon me the heaviest punishment, without trial or hearing. Since then I must either answer your lordship's arguments, or else forsake mine own just defence, I will force mine aching head to do me service for an hour. I must first deny my discontentment (which was forced to be an humorous discontent); and in that it was unseasonable, or is so long continuing, your lordship should rather condole with me than expostulate: natural seasons are expected here below, but violent and unseasonable storms come from above; there is no tempest to the passionate indignation of a prince, nor yet at any time so unseasonable as when it lighteth on those that might expect an harvest of their careful and painful labours. He that is once wounded must needs feel smart till his hurt be cured, or the part hurt become senseless. But cure I expect none, her majesty's heart being obdurate; and be without sense I cannot, being of flesh and blood. But you may say, I aim at the end; I do more than aim, for I see an end of all my fortunes, I have set an end to all my desires. In this course do I any thing for mine enemies? When I was present I found them absolute, and therefore I had rather they should triumph alone, than have me attendant upon their chariots. Or do I leave my friends? When I was a courtier I could sell them no fruit of my love, and now that I am an hermit, they shall bear no envy for their love to me. Or do I forsake myself, because I do not enjoy myself? Or do I overthrow my fortunes, because I build not a fortune of paper walls, which every puff of wind bloweth down? Or do I ruin mine honour,

because I leave following the pursuit, or wearing the false mark or the shadow of honour? Do I give courage or comfort to the enemies, because I neglect myself to encounter them, or because I keep my heart from business, though I cannot keep my fortune from declining? No, no, I give every one of those considerations his due right, and the more I weigh them, the more I find myself justified from offending in any of them. As for the two last objections, that I forsake my country when it hath most need of me, and fail in that indissoluble duty which I owe to my sovereign; I answer, That if my country had at this time any need of my public service, her majesty that governeth it would not have driven me to a private life. I am tied to my country by two bonds; one public, to discharge carefully and industriously that trust which is committed to me; the other private, to sacrifice for it my life and carcass, which hath been nourished in it. Of the first I am free, being dismissed by her majesty: of the other, nothing can free me but death, and therefore no occasion of performance shall sooner offer itself, but I will meet it half way. The indissoluble duty I owe unto her majesty, the service of an earl and of marshal of England, and I have been content to do her the service of a clerk, but I can never serve her as a villain or a slave. But you say I must give way to time. So I do; for now that I see the storm come, I have put myself into harbour. Seneca saith, We must give way to fortune: I know that fortune is both blind and strong, and therefore I go as far as I can out of the way. You say the remedy is not to strive: I neither strive nor seek for remedy. But you say, I must yield and submit: I can neither yield myself to be guilty, nor this my imprisonment, lately laid upon me, to be just: I owe so much to the Author of truth, as I can never yield truth to be falsehood, nor falsehood to be truth. Have I given cause, you ask, and yet take a scandal? No, I gave no cause to take up so much as Fimbria his complaint: for I did *totum telum corpore accipere*; I patiently bear and sensibly feel all that I then received when this scandal was given me. Nay, when the vilest of all indignities are done unto me, doth religion enforce me to sue? Doth God require it? Is it impiety not to do it? Why? Cannot princes err? Cannot subjects receive

wrong? Is an earthly power infinite? Pardon me, pardon me, my lord, I can never subscribe to these principles. Let Solomon's fool laugh when he is stricken; let those that mean to make their profit of princes, shew to have no sense of princes' injuries; let them acknowledge an infinite absoluteness on earth, that do not believe an absolute infiniteness in heaven. As for me, I have received wrong, I feel it; my cause is good, I know it; and whatsoever comes, all the powers on earth can never shew more strength or constancy in oppressing, than I can shew in suffering whatsoever can or shall be imposed upon me. Your lordship in the beginning of your letter makes me a player, and yourself a looker-on; and me a player of my own game, so you may see more than I; but give me leave to tell you, that since you do but see, and I do suffer, I must of necessity feel more than you. I must crave your lordship's patience to give him that hath a crabbed fortune leave to use a crooked style. But whatsoever my style is, there is no heart more humble, nor more affected, towards your lordship, than that of your lordship's poor friend.

LETTER VII.

Sir Henry Sidney to his son Philip Sidney, at school at Shrewsbury, an. 1566, 9 Eliz. then being of the age of twelve years.

I HAVE received two letters from you, one written in Latin, the other in French, which I take in good part, and will you to exercise that practice of learning often; for that will stand you in most stead, in that profession of life that you are born to live in. And, since this is my first letter that ever I did write to you, I will not, that it be all empty of some advices, which my natural care of you provoketh me to wish you to follow, as documents to you in this your tender age. Let your first action be, the lifting up of your mind to Almighty God, by hearty prayer, and feelingly digest the words you speak in prayer with continual meditation, and thinking of him to whom you pray, and of the matter for which you pray. And use this as an ordinary, at, and at an ordinary hour. Whereby the time itself will put you in

remembrance to do that which you are accustomed to do. In that time apply your study to such hours as your discreet master doth assign you earnestly; and the time (I know) he will so limit, as shall be both sufficient for your learning, and safe for your health. And mark the sense and the matter of that you read, as well as the words. So shall you both enrich your tongue with words and your wit with matter; and judgment will grow as years growth in you. Be humble and obedient to your master, for unless you frame yourself to obey others, yea, and feel in yourself what obedience is, you shall never be able to teach others how to obey you. Be courteous of gesture, and affable to all men, with diversity of reverence, according to the dignity of the person. There is nothing that winneth so much with so little cost. Use moderate diet, so as, after your meat, you may find your wit fresher, and not duller, and your body more lively, and not more heavy. Seldom drink wine, and yet sometime do, lest being enforced to drink upon the sudden, you should find yourself inflamed. Use exercise of body, but such as is without peril of your joints or bones. It will increase your force, and enlarge your breath. Delight to be cleanly, as well in all parts of your body as in your garments. It shall make you grateful in each company, and otherwise loathsom. Give yourself to be merry, for you degenerate from your father, if you find not yourself most able in wit and body, to do any thing, when you be most merry; but let your mirth be ever void of all scurrility, and biting words to any man, for a wound given by a word is oftentimes harder to be cured, than that which is given with the sword. Be you rather a hearer and bearer away of other men's talk than a beginner or procurer of speech, otherwise you shall be counted to delight to hear yourself speak. If you hear a wise sentence, or an apt phrase, commit it to your memory, with respect of the circumstance, when you shall speak it. Let never oath be heard to come out of your mouth, nor words of ribaldry: detest it in others, so shall custom make to yourself a law against it in yourself. Be modest in each assembly, and rather be rebuked of light fellows, for maiden-like shamefacedness, than of your sad friends for pert boldness. Think upon every word that you will speak,

before you utter it, and remember how nature hath rampired up (as it were) the tongue with teeth, lips, yea, and hair without the lips, and all betokening reins, or bridles, for the loose use of that member. Above all things tell no untruth, no not in trifles. The custom of it is naughty; and let it not satisfy you, that, for a time, the hearers take it for a truth, for after it will be known as it is, to your shame; for there cannot be a greater reproach to a gentleman than to be accounted a liar. Study and endeavour yourself to be virtuously occupied. So shall you make such an habit of well doing in you, that you shall not know how to do evil, though you would. Remember, my son, the noble blood you are descended of, by your mother's side; and think, that only by virtuous life and good action you may be an ornament to that illustrious family; and otherwise, through vice and sloth, you shall be counted *labes generis*, one of the greatest curses that can happen to man. Well (my little Philip), this is enough for me, and too much I fear for you. But if I shall find that this light meal of digestion nourish any thing the weak stomach of your young capacity, I will, as I find the same grow stronger, feed it with tougher food. Your loving father, so long as you live in the fear of God.

LETTER VIII.

Sir Henry Sidney to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

My dearest lord,
SINCE this gentleman, sir Nicholas Arnold, doth now repair into England to render account of his long and painful service, lest my silence might be an argument of my condemnation of him, I thought good to accompany him with these my letters, certifying your lordship, by the same, that I find he hath been a marvellous painful man, and very diligent in inquiry for the queen's advantage, and in proceeding in the same more severe than I would have wished him, or would have been myself in semblable service; but he saith he followed his instructions. Doubtless the things which he did deal in are very dark and intricate, by reason of the long time passed without account; and he greatly impeached, for lack of

an auditor, as I take it. In truth, what will fall out of it, I cannot say; but I fear he hath written too affirmatively upon Birmingham's information: it is reported by some of his adversaries, that he should triumph greatly upon a letter, supposed to be sent him lately from your lordship, as though, by the same, he should be encouraged to proceed more vehemently against the earl of Sussex, and to make his abode longer here than else he would. And that he should use this bravery, either by shewing this letter, or by speech to me and to others. My lord, I believe the whole of this to be untrue; and, for so much as concerneth myself, I assure your lordship is a stark lie; for albeit he hath shewed me, as I believe, all the letters your lordship hath sent him, since my arrival here, and a good many sent before, yet in none of them is there any such matter contained; neither yet did he to me, or to my knowledge to any other, of any letter sent by your lordship, make any such bravery, or like construction, as is reported.

My dearest lord and brother, without any respect of me, or any brotherlike love borne me by you, but even for our natural country's cause (whereunto, of late, not a little to your far spreading fame, you shew yourself most willingly to put your indefatigable and much helping hand), help to revoke me from this regiment, for being not credited, this realm will ruin under my rule, perhaps to my shame, but undoubtedly to England's harm: yea, and will under any man whom the queen shall send, though he have the force of Hercules, the magnanimity of Cæsar, the diligence of Alexander, and the eloquence of Tully; her highness withdrawing her gracious countenance. Yea if it be but thought that her highness hath not a resolute and unremoveable liking of him; as for no tale she will direct him to sail by any other compass than his own; his ship of regiment, whosoever he be, shall sooner rush on a rock, than rest in a haven. I write not this, as though I thought governors here could not err, and so err, as they should be revoked. For I know and confess, that any one may so err, yea, without any evil intent to her highness's crown or country, as it shall be convenient and necessary to revoke him; but let it be done then with speed. Yet if it be but conceived, that he be insufficient to

govern here, I mean of the sovereign, or magistrates, retire him, and send a new man to the helm. *Episcopatum ejus accipiat alter*: so as my counsel is (and you shall find it the soundest) that the governor's continuance here, and his continuance there, be concurrent and correlative. For while her highness will employ any man here, all the countenance, all the credit, all the commendation, yea, and most absolute trust that may be, is little enough. Cause once appearing to withdraw that opinion, withdraw him, too, if it be possible, even in that instant. Of this I would write more largely and more particularly, and to the queen's majesty, and to all my lords, were it not that my many letters in this form already written, together with sundry arguments of my crazy credit there, did put me in hope of a speedy redemption from this my miserable thralldom. A resolution of which my hope, my dearest lord, procure me with speed: I have no more, but *sub umbra alarum tuarum protegat me Deus*. In haste I take my leave of your lordship, wishing to the same present, increasing, and immortal felicity. From Kilmainham, the 28th of June, 1566. Your lordship's bounden, fast, and obedient brother.

P. S. I assure your lordship I do know that sir Nicholas Arnold hath spent, above all his entertainment, 500*l.* sterling in this realm. I mean he hath spent so much in this realm.

LETTER IX.

*The Right Honourable Thomas Sackvil,
Lord Buckhurst, to Sir Henry Sidney.*

My lord,

I TRUST your lordship will pardon me, in that I have not (as indeed possibly I could not) attend to make a meeting, for the end of this variance betwixt your lordship and me; and now being this day also so wrapt in business that I cannot by any means be a suretyer, I thought to write these few to your lordship, and therein to ascertain you, that, because our meeting with the master of the rolls, and Mr. Hensias meeting, will be so uncertain, that, therefore, what time soever you shall like to appoint I will come to the rolls, and there your lordship and I, as good neighbours and friends, will,

if we can, compound the cause of ourselves. If we cannot, we will both pray the master of the rolls, as indifferent, as I know he is, to persuade him to the right, that stands in the wrong. And thus, I doubt not, but there shall be a good end to both our contentions: your lordship not seeking that which is not yours; nor I, in any sort, meaning to detain from you your own. This 23d May, 1574. All yours to command.

LETTER X.

*Sir Henry Sidney to Robert Dudley, Earl
of Leicester.*

My dearest lord,

I RECEIVED not your letter of the 25th of November until the 24th of this January, by James Prescott, who was seven times at the sea, and put back again, before he could recover this coast.

I trust I have satisfied your lordship with my writing, and others by my procurement, sent by Pakenham, touching the false and malicious bruit of the earl of Essex's poisoning. If not, what you will have more done, shall be done. I am sorry I hear not how you like of that I have done, and the more, for that I am advertised of Pagnaney's arrival there. I would not have doubted to have made Knell to have retracted his inconsiderate and foolish speech and writing; but God hath prevented me by taking him away, dying of the same disease that the earl died, which, most certainly, was free from any poison, and a mere flux; a disease appropriated to this country, and whereof there died many in the latter part of the last year, and some out of mine own household; and yet free from any suspicion of poison.

And for my lord of Ormond's causes, I humbly beseech your lordship be my pawn, that I will to him justice as indifferently and speedily as I will to any man, considering the cause and necessary circumstances incident to the same; but for love and loving offices, I will do as I find cause. I crave nothing at his hand, but that which he oweth to the queen, and that which her great liberality, beside natural duty, bindeth him to. And if he will have of me that I owe him not, as he hath had, he cannot win it by crossing me, as I hear he doth in the court; and as I have cause to deem he

doth in this country. In fine, my lord, I am ready to accord with him ; but, my most dear lord and brother, be you upon your keeping for him, for if Essex had lived, you should have found him as violent an enemy, as his heart, power, and cunning, would have served him to have been ; and for that their malice, I take God to record, I could brook nothing of them both.

Your lordship's latter written letter I received the same day I did the first, together with one from my lord of Pembroke to your lordship ; by both which I find, to my exceeding great comfort, the likelihood of a marriage between his lordship and my daughter, which great honour to me, my mean lineage and kin, I attribute to my match in your noble house ; for which I acknowledge myself bound to honour and serve the same, to the uttermost of my power ; yea, so joyfully have I at heart, that my dear child's so happy an advancement as this is, as, in truth, I would lie a year in close prison rather than it should break. But, alas ! my dearest lord, mine ability answereth not my hearty desire. I am poor ; mine estate, as well in livelihood and moveable, is not unknown to your lordship, which wanteth much to make me able to equal that, which I know my lord of Pembroke may have. Two thousand pounds I confess I have bequeathed her, which your lordship knoweth I might better spare her when I were dead, than one thousand living ; and in truth, my lord, I have it not, but borrow it I must, and so I will : and if your lordship will get me leave, that I may feed my eyes with that joyful sight of their coupling, I will give her a cup worth five hundred pounds. Good my lord, bear with my poverty, for if I had it, little would I regard any sum of money, but willingly would give it, protesting before the Almighty God, that if he, and all the powers on earth, would give me my choice for a husband for her, I would choose the earl of Pembroke. I writ to my lord of Pembroke, which herewith I send your lordship ; and thus I end, in answering your most welcome and honourable letter, with my hearty prayer to Almighty God to perfect your lordship's good work, and requite you for the same, for I am not able. For myself, I am in great despair to obtain the fee farm of my small leases, which

grieveth me more for the discredit, during mine own time, than the lack of the gain to my succession, be it as God will.

I find, by divers means, that there is great expectation of my wishing her majesty's treasure appointed for the service of this country ; and, in truth, no man living would fainer nourish it than I ; and, in proof thereof, I will abate one thousand pounds of the quarterage due the last of March, so as I may have the other four thousand due, then delivered to the treasurer's assign, together with that due the last of December last ; and, if I can, I will abate every quarter one thousand pounds. The actual rebellion of the Clanricardines, the O'Connors, and O'Mores, the sums of money delivered in discharge of those soldiers which were of my lord of Essex's regiment, and the great sums imprested in the beginning of my charge, well considered ; it may and will appear a good offer ; and, I pray your lordship, let it have your favourable recommendation.

Now, my dearest lord, I have a suit unto you for a necessary and honest servant of mine, Hercules Rainsford, whose father, and whole lineage, are devout followers to your lordship and family. My suit is, that whereas by composition with James Wingfield, he is constable of the castle of Dublin, and therein both painfully and carefully serveth, that it would please your lordship to obtain it for him during his life. Truly, my lord, like as you should bind the poor gentleman, and all his honest friends, always to serve you, for your bounty done to him ; so shall I take it as a great mercy done to myself ; for truly I have found him a faithful and profitable servant, and beside, he hath married a good and old servant of my wife's. Good my lord, send Philip to me ; there was never father had more need of his son, than I have of him. Once again, good my lord, let me have him.

For the state of this country, it may please you to give credit to Prescott.

I am now, even now, deadly weary of writing, and therefore I end, praying to the Almighty to bless you with all your noble heart's desires. From Dundalk, this 4th of February, 1576. Your most assured brother at commandment.

LETTER XI.

Sir Henry Sidney to Queen Elizabeth.

May it please your most excellent majesty,

To understand, that of late it hath pleased Almighty God to call to his mercy the bishop of Ossory, and so the room of that see is become void, and to be now by your highness conferred. I have therefore thought it my duty, moved in zeal for the reformation of the country and good of the people, humbly to beseech your majesty, that good care were had, that the church might be supplied with a fit man, and such a person as is acquainted with the language and manners of this country people might be promoted to succeed in the place; of which number I humbly recommend unto your excellent majesty Mr. Davy Cleere, one that hath been long bred and brought up in the University of Oxford, a master of arts of good continuance, a man esteemed not meanly learned, besides well given in religion, and of a modest discreet government, and commendable conversation, being a man specially noted unto me, by the good report of the lord archbishop of Dublin, for his sufficiency to the place, with a very earnest desire that (the same being the place of a suffragan under him) the said Cleere might be preferred unto it. The bishopric is but a mean living, yet a sufficient finding for an honest man. And because the sooner the place shall be full of an able man (such a one for his integrity as this man is esteemed), the greater fruit will thereby grow to the church, honour to your majesty, and no small hope to be conceived of good to the people; whereof, as it becometh me (having the principal charge of this realm under your majesty), I have a special care. I write not only to your majesty in this case, by a report of others, but partly by knowledge and experience I have had of the man myself. And therefore am the more desirous that your majesty should graciously allow of my commendation and choice, and give order for his admission and consecration, when it shall be your majesty's pleasure to signify the same. And even so, with my most earnest and humble hearty prayer to the Almighty, long and happily to preserve your highness to reign over us, your majesty's

humble and obedient subjects, to our estimable comforts, I humbly take my leave. From your majesty's castle of Athlone, the 4th of September, 1576. Your majesty's most humble, faithful, and obedient servant.

LETTER XII.

Sir Henry Sidney to Mr. Secretary Walsingham, concerning the reports of the Earl of Essex's death.

Sir,

IMMEDIATELY upon my return out of Connaught to this city, which was the 13th of this present October, and knowing of the death of the earl of Essex, which I did not certainly till I came within thirty miles of this town, and that his body was gone to be buried at Carmarthen, and hearing besides, that letters had been sent over, as well before his death as after, that he died of poison, I thought good to examine the matter as far as I could learn, and certify you, to the end you might impart the same to the lords, and both satisfy them therein, and all others, whom it might please you to participate the same unto, and would believe the truth. For, in truth, there was no appearance or cause of suspicion that could be gathered that he died of poison. For the manner of his disease was this; a flux took him on the Thursday at night, being the 30th of August last past, in his own house, where he had that day both supped and dined; the day following he rode to the archbishop of Dublin's, and there supped and lodged; the next morning following he rode to the viscount of Baltinglass, and there did lie one night, and from thence returned back to this city; all these days he travelled hastily, fed three times a day, without finding any fault, either through inflammation of his body or alteration of taste; but often he would complain of grief in his belly, and sometimes say, that he had never hearty grief of mind, but that a flux would accompany the same. After he returned from this journey he grew from day to day sicker and sicker, and having an Irish physician sent to him by the earl of Ormond, doctor Trevor, an Oxford man, and my physician, Mr. Chaloner, secretary of this state, and not unlearned in physic, and one that often, for good will, giveth counsel to his friends

in cases of sickness, and one Mr. Knell, an honest preacher in this city, and a chaplain of his own, and a professor of physic, continually with him, they never ministered any thing to him against poison. The Irish physician affirmed before good witnesses that he was not poisoned; what the others do say of that matter, by their own writings, which herewith I send you, you shall perceive. And drawing towards his end, being especially asked by the archbishop of Dublin whether he thought that he was poisoned or no, constantly affirmed that he thought he was not; nor that he felt in himself any cause why he should conjecture so to be: in his sickness his colour rather bettered than impaired; no hair of his body shed, no nail altered, nor tooth loosed, nor any part of his skin blemished. And when he was opened it could not appear that any intrail within his body, at any time, had been infected with any poison. And yet I find a bruit there was that he was poisoned; and that arose by some words spoken by himself, and yet not originally at the first conceived of himself, as it is thought by the wisest here, and those that were continually about him; but one that was very near him at that time, and whom he entirely trusted, seeing him in extreme pain with flux and gripings in his belly, by reason of the same, said to him, By the mass, my lord, you are poisoned; whereupon the yeoman of his cellar was presently sent for to him, and mildly and lovingly he questioned with him, saying, that he sent not for him to burden him, but to excuse him. The fellow constantly answered, that if he had taken any hurt by his wine he was guilty of it; for, my lord (saith he), since you gave me warning in England to be careful of your drink, you have drank none but it passed my hands. Then it was bruited, that the boiled water which he continually drank with his wine should be made of water wherein flax or hemp should be steeped, which the yeoman of his cellar flatly denied, affirming the water which he always boiled for him was perfect good. Then it was imputed to the sugar; he answered, he could get no better at the steward's hands, and fair though it were not, yet wholesome enough, or else it had been likely that a great many should have had a shrewd turn; for my house-

hold and many more have occupied of the same almost these twelve months. The physicians were asked what they thought, that they spoke doubtfully, saying it might be that he was poisoned, alleging that this thing or that thing might poison him, since they never gave him medicine for it; they constantly affirm that they never thought it but for argument's sake, and partly to please the earl. He had two gentlewomen that night at supper with him that the disease took him, and they coming after to visit him, and he hearing that they were troubled with some looseness, said that he feared that they and he had tasted of one drug, and his page (who was gone with his body over before I returned). The women upon his words were afraid; but never sick, and are in as good a state of health as they were before they supped with him. Upon suspicion of his being poisoned, Mr. Knell (as it was told me) gave him sundry times of unicorn's horns, upon which sometimes he vomited, as at other times he did, when he took it not. Thus I have delivered unto you as much as I can learn of the sickness and death of this noble peer, whom I left when I left Dublin, in all appearance a lusty, strong, and pleasant man; and before I returned his breath was out of his body, and his body out of this country, and undoubtedly his soul in heaven; for in my life I never heard of a man to die in such perfectness; he was sick twenty or twenty-one days, and most of those days tormented with pangs intolerable; but in all that time, and all that torture, he was never heard speak an idle or angry word: after he yielded to die, he desired much to have his friends come to him; and to abide with him, which they did of sundry sorts, unto whom he shewed such arguments of hearty repentance of his life passed, so sound charity with all the world, such assurance to be partaker of the joys of heaven through the merits of Christ's passion, such a joyful desire, speedily to be dissolved, and to enjoy the same, which he would sometimes say, That it pleased the Almighty to reveal unto him that he should be partaker of (as was to the exceeding admiration of all that heard it). He had continually about him folks of sundry degrees, as men of the clergy, gentlemen, gentlewomen, citizens, and servants, unto all which

he would use so godly exhortations and grave admonitions, and that so aptly for the persons he spake unto, as in all his life he never seemed to be half so wise, learned, nor eloquent, nor of so good memory as at his death. He forgot not to send weighty warnings to some of his absent friends by message. Oft-times, when grievous pangs had driven him out of slumbers, he would make such shew of comfort in spirit, and express it with such words, as many about him thought he saw and heard some heavenly voice and vision. Many times after bitter pangs he would with cheerful countenance cry, Courage! courage! I have fought a good fight, and thus ought every true soldier to do, that fighteth under the standard of his captain and patron Jesus Christ. About eleven of the clock before noon, on the 22d of September, with the name of Jesus issuing out of his mouth, he left to speak any more, and shortly after lifting up his hand to the name of Jesus, when he could not speak it himself; he ceased to move any more, but sweetly and mildly his ghost departed, by all Christians to be hoped into heavenly bliss. The Almighty grant that all professing Christ in their life, may at their death make such testimony of Christianity as this noble earl did. And thus ending my tedious letter, with the doleful (and yet comfortable) end of this noble man, I wish you from the bottom of my heart, good life and long; and the joy of heaven at the end. From the castle of Dublin this 20th of October, 1576. Your assured loving friend.

LETTER XIII.

Sir Henry Sidney to the Lords of the Council.

My very good lords,
My humble duty remembered to your honourable lordships: after I was come hither to deal in causes of the north, I received letters sent unto me by an express messenger from the archbishop of Dublin, to desire license of me to repair into England with some note and testimony from me, what I had found of him here. And albeit the motion seemed to me at the first to be very sudden; yet considering the manner of his writing, and the conveying of his meaning, pro-

ceeded from some deep conceit of a perplexed mind and a sorrowful heart, for some matter that touched him near (as it seemed), I could not deny him so reasonable a request, but granted him leave to depart, with this testimony, that I have found him ready to come to me at all times, when I had occasion to use his assistance for her majesty's service, and very willing to set forward any thing that might either concern the public benefit or quiet of the country, or her majesty's honour or profit; besides, a man well given, and zealous in religion, diligent in preaching, and no niggard in hospitality, but a great reliever of his poor neighbours, and by his good behaviour and dealing gained both love and credit amongst those with whom he hath been conversant; and carried himself in that reputation in the world, as I have not known him at any time either detected or suspected of any notorious or public crime. And thus much I thought good to declare to your lordships of him, and that I have not had cause at any time to think otherwise of him, but as of a sound counsellor to the queen, and good minister to this country and commonwealth. And even so, beseeching your lordships' favourable acceptance of him, and in his petitions (if he have any) to stand his good lords, I humbly take my leave. From the Newry, the 12th of February, 1576. Your good lordships' assured loving friend to command.

LETTER XIV.

Sir Henry Sidney to his son Robert Sidney, afterwards Earl of Leicester.

Robin,

YOUR several letters of the 17th of September and 9th of November I have received; but that sent by Carolus Clusius I have not yet heard of. Your letters are most heartily welcome to me; but the universal testimony that is made of you, of the virtuous course you hold in this your juvenile age, and how much you profit in the same, and what excellent parts God hath already planted in you, doth so rejoice me, that the sight of no earthly thing is more, or can be more, to my comfort, than hearing in this sort from, and of you. Our Lord bless you, my sweet boy. *Perge, perge*, my Robin, in the filial fear of God, and

in the meanest imagination of yourself, and to the loving direction of your most loving brother.

I like very well of your being at Prague; and of your intention to go to Vienna. I wish you should curiously look upon the fortification of that; and considering the state of Christendom, I cannot tell how to design your travel into Italy. I would not have you to go specially, for that there is perpetual war between the pope and us. I think the princes and potentates of that region are confederated with him; and for some other respects, I would not have you go thither. Yet from Spain we are as it were under an inhibition; France in endless troubles; the Low Country in irrecoverable misery. So I leave it to your brother and yourself, whether Vienna being seen, you will return into England, or spend the next summer in those parts; which if you do, I think best (you being satisfied with Vienna) you see the principal cities of Moravia and Silesia, and so to Cracow; and if you can have any commodity, to see the court of the king of that realm: and from thence through Saxony, to Holst, and Pomerland, seeing the princes' courts by the way; and then into Denmark and Sweden, and see those kings' courts. Acquaint you somewhat with the estate of the free States; and so at Hamburgh to embark, and to winter with me. But what do I blunder at these things? follow the direction of your most loving brother, who in loving you is comparable with me, or exceedeth me. Imitate his virtues, exercises, studies, and actions; he is a rare ornament of this age, the very formular that all well-disposed young gentlemen of our court do form also their manners and life by. In truth, I speak it without flattery of him, or of myself, he hath the most rare virtues that ever I found in any man. I saw him not these six months, little to my comfort. You may hear from him with more ease than from me. In your travels these documents I will give you, not as mine but his practices. Seek the knowledge of the estate of every prince, court, and city, that you pass through. Address yourself to the company, to learn this of the elder sort, and yet neglect not the younger. By the one you shall gather learning, wisdom, and knowledge, by the other acquaintance, languages, and exercise. This he effectually observed with

great gain of understanding. Once again I say imitate him. I hear you are fallen into concert and fellowship with sir Harry Nevell's son and heir, and one Mr. Savell. I hear of singular virtues of them both. I am glad of your familiarity with them.

The 21st of this present I received your letter of the 12th of the same, and with it a letter from Mr. Languet, who seemeth as yet to mislike nothing in you; for which I like you a great deal the better; and I hope I shall hear further of your commendation from him, which will be to my comfort. I find by Harry White that all your money is gone, which with some wonder displeaseth me; and if you cannot frame your charges according to that proportion I have appointed you, I must and will send for you home. I have sent order to Mr. Languet for one hundred pounds for you, which is twenty pounds more than I promised you; and this I look and order that it shall serve you till the last of March, 1580. Assure yourself I will not enlarge one groat, therefore look well to your charges.

I hope by that time you shall receive this letter you will be at or near Strasburgh, from which resolve not to depart till the middle of April come twelvemonth; nor then I will not that you do, unless you so apply your study, as by that time you do conceive feelingly rhetoric and logic, and have the tongues of Latin, French, and Dutch; which I know you may have, if you will apply your will and wit to it. I am sure you cannot but find what lack in learning you have by your often departing from Oxford; and the like, and greater loss shall you find, if you resolve not to remain continually for the time appointed in Strasburgh. Write to me monthly, and of your charges particularly; and either in Latin or French. I take in good part that you have kept promise with me; and on my blessing I charge you to write truly to me from time to time, whether you keep it or no; and if you break it in some dark manner, how.

Pray daily; speak nothing but truly. Do no dishonest thing for any respect. Love Mr. Languet with reverence, unto whom in most hearty manner commend me; and to Doctor Lubetius, and Mr. Doctor Sturmius. Farewell. If you will follow my counsel you shall be my sweet

boy. From Baynard's Castle in London, this 25th of March, 1578. Your loving father.

LETTER XV.

Sir Philip Sidney to his father Sir Henry Sidney.

Right honourable my singular good lord and father,

So strangely and diversely goes the course of the world by the interchanging humours of those that govern it, that though it be most noble to have always one mind and one constancy, yet can it not be always directed to one point: but must needs sometimes alter his course, according as the force of other changes drives it. As now in your lordship's case to whom of late I wrote, wishing your lordship to return as soon as conveniently you might, encouraged thereunto by the assurance the best sort had given me, with what honourable considerations your return should befall, particularly to your lot: it makes me change my style, and write to your lordship, that keeping still your mind in one state of virtuous quietness, you will yet frame your course according to them. And as they delay your honourable rewarding, so you by good means do delay your return, till either that ensue, or fitter time be for this.

Her majesty's letters prescribed you a certain day, I think; the day was past before Pagnam came unto you, and enjoined to do some things, the doing whereof must necessarily require some longer time. Hereupon your lordship is to write back, not as though you desired to tarry, but only shewing that unwillingly you must employ some days thereabouts; and if it please you to add, that the chancellor's presence shall be requisite; for by him your lordship shall either have honourable revocation, or commandment of further stay at least till Michaelmas, which in itself shall be a fitter time; considering that then your term comes fully out, so that then your enemies cannot glory it is their procuring. In the mean time, your friends may labour here to bring to a better pass such your reasonable and honourable desires, which time can better bring forth than speed. Among which friends, before

God there is none proceeds either so thoroughly or so wisely as my lady my mother. For mine own part I have had only light from her. Now rests it in your lordship to weigh the particularities of your own estate, which no man can know so well as yourself; and accordingly to resolve. For mine own part (of which mind your best friends are here) this is your best way. At least whatsoever you resolve, I beseech you with all speed I may understand, and that if it please you with your own hand; for truly, sir, I must needs impute it to some great dishonesty of some about you, that there is little written from you, or to you, that is not perfectly known to your professed enemies. And thus much I am very willing they should know, that I do write it unto you: and in that quarter you may, as I think, look precisely to the saving of some of those overplussages, or at least not to go any further; and then the more time passes, the better it will be blown over. Of my being sent to the queen, being armed with good accounts, and perfect reasons for them, &c.

25th April, 1578.

LETTER XVI.

Sir Philip Sidney to Edward Waterhouse, Esq. Secretary of Ireland.

My good Ned,

NEVER since you went, that ever you wrote to me, and yet I have not failed to do some friendly offices for you here. How know I that? say you. I cannot tell. But I know that no letters I have received from you. Thus doth unkindness make me fall to a point of kindness. Good Ned, either come or write. Let me either see thee, hear thee, or read thee. Your other friends that know more will write more fully. I, of myself, thus much. Always one, and in one case. *Me solo exultans totus teres atque rotundus.* Commend me to my lord president; to the noble sir Nicholas, whom I bear special goodwill to; to my cousin Harry Harrington, whom I long to see in health; sir Nicholas Bagnol: Mr. Agarde's daughter; my cousin Spikman for your sake; and whosoever is mayor of Dublin for my sake. And even at his house when you think good. I bid you farewell. From Court, this 28th April, 1578. Your very loving friend.

LETTER XVII.

*Sir Philip Sidney to Edward Molineux,
Esq. Secretary to his father as Lord
Deputy.*

Mr. Molineux,

Few words are best. My letters to my father have come to the eyes of some. Neither can I condemn any but you for it. If it be so, you have played the very knave with me; and so I will make you know if I have good proof of it. But that for so much as is past. For that is to come, I assure you before God, that if ever I know you do so much as read any letter I write to my father, without his commandment, or my consent, I will thrust my dagger into you. And trust to it, for I speak it in earnest. In the mean time farewell. From Court, this last day of May, 1578.

LETTER XVIII.

*Edward Molineux, Esq. to Philip Sidney,
in answer to the abovesaid letter.*

Sir,

I HAVE received a letter from you, which, as it is the first, so the same is the sharpest that I ever received from any: and therefore it amazeth me the more to receive such a one from you, since I have (the world can be judge) deserved better somewhere, howsoever it pleaseth you to condemn me now. But since it is (I protest to God) without cause, or yet just ground of suspicion you use me thus, I bear the injury more patiently for a time; and mine innocency, I hope, in the end shall try mine honesty; and then I trust you will confess you have done me wrong. And since your pleasure so is expressed, that I shall not henceforth read any of your letters; although I must confess I have heretofore taken both great delight and profit in reading some of them: yet upon so hard a condition (as you seem to offer) I will not hereafter adventure so great a peril, but obey you herein. Howbeit, if it had pleased you, you might have commanded me in a far greater matter, with a far less penalty. From the Castle of Dublin, the 1st of July, 1578. Yours, when it shall please you better to conceive of me, humbly to command.

LETTER XIX.

*Sir Henry Sidney to his son Sir Philip
Sidney.*

Philip,

By the letters you sent me by Sackford, you have discovered unto me your intention to go over into the Low Countries, to accompany duke Cassimier, who hath with so noble offers and by so honourable means invited you: which disposition of your virtuous mind, as I must needs much commend in you, so when I enter into the consideration of mine own estate, and call to mind what practices, informations, and malicious accusations, are devised against me; and what an assistance in the defence of those causes your presence would be unto me, reposing myself so much both upon your help and judgment, I strive betwixt honour and necessity, what allowance I may best give of that motion for your going: howbeit, if you think not my matters of that weight and difficulty (as I hope they be not), but that they may be well enough by myself, without your assistance or any other, be brought to an honourable end, I will not be against your determination. Yet would wish you, before your departure, that you come to me to the water-side* about the latter end of this month, to take your leave of me, and so from thence to depart towards your intended journey. You must now bear with me, that I write not this unto you with mine own hand, which I would have done, if the indisposition of my body had not been such I could not. God prosper you in that you shall go about, and send you to win much credit and honour. And I send you my daily blessing. Your very loving father.

The 1st of August, 1578.

LETTER XX.

*Lady Mary Sidney to Edmund Molineux,
Esq.*

Molineux,

I THOUGHT good to put you in remembrance to move my lord chamberlain, in my lord's name, to have some other room than my chamber, for my lord to have his resort unto, as he was wont to

* His house was at Baynard's Castle, by the water-side near St. Paul's.

have; or else my lord will be greatly troubled when he shall have any matters of dispatch; my lodging, you see, being very little, and myself continually sick, and not able to be much out of my bed. For the night time one roof, with God's grace, shall serve us; for the day time the queen will look to have my chamber always in a readiness for her majesty's coming thither; and though my lord himself can be no impediment thereto by his own presence, yet his lordship, trusting to no place else to be provided for him, will be, as I said before, troubled for want of a convenient place for the dispatch of such people as shall have occasion to come to him. Therefore I pray you, in my lord's own name, move my lord of Sussex for a room for that purpose, and I will have it hanged and lined for him with stuff from hens. I wish you not to be unmindful hereof: and so for this time I leave you to the Almighty. From Chiswick, this 11th of October 1578. Your very assured loving mistress and friend.

LETTER XXI.

Sir Henry Sidney to his son Robert Sidney, afterwards Earl of Leicester.

Robin,

I HEAR well of you, and the company you keep, which is of great comfort to me. To be of noble parentage usually raises an emulation to follow their great examples. There can be no greater love than of long time hath been, and yet is, between sir Harry Nevell and me; and so will continue till our lives end. Love you thus we have done, and do. One thing I warn you of; arrogate no precedence neither of your countrymen nor of strangers; but take your place promiscuous, with others, according to your degree and birthright, with aliens. Follow your discreet and virtuous brother's rule, who with great discretion, to his great commendation, won love, and could variously ply ceremony with ceremony. I hear you have the Dutch tongue sufficiently, whereof I am glad. You may therefore save money and discharge your Dutchman; and do it indeed, and send for Mr. White; he is an honest young man, and is fairly honest, and good and sound to me and my friends. I send you

now by Stephen 30*l.* which you call arrears: term it as you will, it is all I owe you till Easter; and 20*l.* of that, as Griffin Madox telleth me, is Harry White's. I will send you at or before Frankfort mart 60*l.*, either to bring you home, or to find you abroad, as you and your brother shall agree, for half a year ending at Michaelmas; so Harry White neither hath nor shall have cause to think that I am offended with him; for I cannot look for, nor almost wish to hear better of a man than I hear of him; and how I intend to deal with him, you may see by the letter I send him. He shall have his 20*l.* yearly, and you your 100*l.*, and so be as merry as you may. I thank you, my dear boy, for the martern skins you write of. It is more than ever your elder brother sent me; and I will thank you more if they come, for yet I hear not of them, nor ever saw Cassymyre's picture. The messenger (of the picture I mean) played the knave with you and me; and after that sort you may write to him: but if your tokens come I will send you such a suit of apparel as shall beseeem your father's son to wear in any court in Germany. Commend me to the doctor Simeon's father. I love the boy well. I have no more; but God bless you, my sweet child, in this world and for ever; as I in this world find myself happy by my children. From Ludlow Castle, this 28th of October 1578. Your very loving father.

LETTER XXII.

Thomas Lord Buckhurst, to Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester, on the death of Sir Philip Sidney.

My very good lord,

WITH great grief do I write these lines unto you, being thereby forced to renew to your remembrance the decease of that noble gentleman your nephew, by whose death not only your lordship, and all other his friends and kinsfolks, but even her majesty and the whole realm besides do suffer no small loss and detriment. Nevertheless, it may not bring the least comfort unto you, that as he hath both lived and died in fame of honour and reputation to his name, in the worthy service of his prince and country, and with as great love in his life, and with as many tears for his death; as ever any had; so

hath he also by his good and godly end so greatly testified the assurance of God's infinite mercy towards him, as there is no doubt but that he now liveth with immortality, free from the cares and calamities of mortal misery; and in place thereof, remaineth filled with all heavenly joys and felicities, such as cannot be expressed: so as I doubt not, but that your lordship in wisdom, after you have yielded some while to the imperfection of man's nature, will yet in time remember how happy in truth he is, and how miserable and blind we are, that lament his blessed change. Her majesty seemeth resolute to call home your lordship, and intendeth presently to think of some fit personage that may take your place and charge. And in my opinion, her majesty had never more cause to wish you here than now; I pray God send it speedily. I shall not need to enlarge my letter with any other matters, for that this messenger, your lordship's wholly devoted, can sufficiently inform you of all. And so wishing all comfort and contentation unto your lordship, I rest your lordship's wholly for ever, to use and command as your own. From the Court, this 3d of November, 1586. Your lordship's most assured to command.

LETTER XXIII.

Robert Earl of Leicester, to his daughter Dorothy Countess of Sunderland, on the death of the Earl her husband, who lost his life, valiantly fighting for King Charles the First, at the battle of Newberry, 20th September, 1643.

My dear Doll,

I KNOW it is no purpose to advise you not to grieve; that is not my intention; for such a loss as yours cannot be received indifferently by a nature so tender and so sensible as yours; but though your affection to him whom you loved so dearly, and your reason in valuing his merit (neither of which you could do too much), did expose you to the danger of that sorrow which now oppresses you; yet if you consult with that affection, and with that reason, I am persuaded that you will see cause to moderate that sorrow; for your affection to that worthy person may tell you, that

even to it you cannot justify yourself, if you lament his being raised to a degree of happiness, far beyond any that he did or could enjoy upon the earth; such as depends upon no uncertainties, nor can suffer no diminution; and wherein, though he knew your sufferings, he could not be grieved at your afflictions. And your reason will assure you, that beside the vanity of bemoaning that which hath no remedy, you offend him whom you loved, if you hurt that person whom he loved. Remember how apprehensive he was of your dangers, and how sorry for any thing that troubled you: imagine that he sees how you afflict and hurt yourself; you will then believe, that though he looks upon it without any perturbation, for that cannot be admitted, by that blessed condition wherein he is, yet he may censure you, and think you forgetful of the friendship that was between you, if you pursue not his desires, in being careful of yourself, who was so dear unto him. But he sees you not; he knows not what you do; well, what then! Will you do any thing that would displease him if he knew it, because he is where he doth not know it? I am sure that was never in your thoughts; for the rules of your actions were, and must be, virtue, and affection to your husband, not the consideration of his ignorance or knowledge of what you do; that is but an accident; neither do I think that his presence was at any time more than a circumstance, not at all necessary to your abstaining from those things which might displease him. Assure yourself, that all the sighs and tears that your heart and eyes can sacrifice unto your grief, are not such testimonies of your affection as the taking care of those whom he loved, that is, of yourself and of those pledges of your mutual friendship and affection which he hath left with you; and which, though you would abandon yourself, may justly challenge of you the performance of their father's trust, reposed in you, to be careful of them. For their sakes, therefore, assuage your grief; they all have need of you, and one, especially, whose life, as yet, doth absolutely depend on yours. I know you lived happily, and so as nobody but yourself could measure the contentment of it. I rejoiced

at it, and did thank God for making me one of the means to procure it for you. That now is past, and I will not flatter you so much as to say, I think you can ever be so happy in this life again: but this comfort you owe me, that I may see you bear this change and your misfortunes patiently. I shall be more pleased with that than with the other, by as much as I esteem virtue and wisdom in you more than any inconstant benefits that fortune could bestow upon you. It is likely that, as many others do, you will use examples to authorise the present passion which possesseth you: and you may say, that our Saviour himself did weep for the death of one he loved; that is true; but we must not adventure too far after his example in that, no more than a child should run into a river, because he saw a man wade through; for neither his sorrow, nor any other passion could make him sin; but it is not so with us. He was pleased to take our infirmities, but he hath not imparted to us his power to limit or restrain them; for if we let our passions loose they will grow headstrong, and deprive us of the power which we must reserve to ourselves, that we may recover the government which our reason and our religion ought to have above them. I doubt not but your eyes are full of tears, and not the emptier for those they shed. God comfort you, and let us join in prayer to him, that he will be pleased to give his grace to you, to your mother, and to myself, that all of us may resign and submit ourselves entirely and cheerfully to his pleasure. So nothing shall be able to make us unhappy in this life, nor to hinder us from being happy in that which is eternal. Which that you may enjoy at the end of your days, whose number I wish as great as of any mortal creature; and that through them all you may find such comforts as are best and most necessary for you; it is, and shall ever be, the constant prayer of your father that loves you dearly.

Oxford, 10th October, 1643.

LETTER XXIV.

Robert Earl of Leicester to the Queen, at Oxford, desiring to know why he was dismissed from the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Madam,

SUFFER yourself, I beseech you, to receive from a person, happy heretofore in your majesty's good opinion, this humble petition: That whereas the king hath conferred a great honour upon me, which now he hath taken from me, after a long and expenceful attendance for my dispatch; and after his majesty had divers times signified, not only to me, but to my lord Percy also, his intention to send me into Ireland; since which, I cannot imagine what I have done, to alter his majesty's just and gracious purpose towards me.

And whereas it hath pleased the king to tell me lately that he had both acquainted your majesty at the first, with his intention to give me that employment, and since, that he would deprive me of it; I humbly conceive it to be very likely, that the king hath also told your majesty the cause that moved him to it; for I presume, that upon a servant of his and yours, recommended to his favour by your majesty, he would not put such a disgrace without telling your majesty the reason why he did it; but, as I could never flatter myself with any conceit that I had deserved that honour, so I cannot accuse myself neither of having deserved to be dispossessed of it in a manner so extraordinary, and so unusual to the king, to punish without shewing the causes of his displeasure.

In all humility, therefore, I beseech your majesty to let me know my fault, which I am confident I shall acknowledge, as soon as I may see it; for though it be too late to offer such satisfaction as, being graciously accepted, might have prevented the misfortune which has fallen upon me; yet I may present the testimonies of my sorrow for having given any just cause of offence to either of your majesties.

I seek not to recover my office, madam, but your good opinion; or to obtain your pardon, if my fault be but of error; and that I may either have the happiness to satisfy your majesties that I have

not offended, and so justify my first innocence, or gain repentance, which I may call a second innocence. I must confess, this is a great importunity; but, I presume, your majesty will forgive it, if you please to consider how much I am concerned in that which brings instant destruction to my fortune, present dishonour to myself, and the same, for ever, to my poor family; for I might have passed away unregarded and unremembered. But now, having been raised to an eminent place, and dispossessed of it otherwise than I think any of my predecessors in that place have been, the usual time being not expired, no offence objected, nor any recompence assigned; I shall be transmitted to the knowledge of following times with a mark of distrust, which I cannot but think an infamy, full of grief to myself, and of prejudice to my posterity.

For these reasons, I humbly beseech your majesty to make my offence to appear, that I may undeceive myself, and see that it was but a false integrity which I have boasted and presumed upon, that others may know that which yet they can but suspect; and that I may no longer shelter myself under the vain protection of a pretended affection to the king and your majesty's service, nor under the excuse of ignorance or infirmity: but let me bear the whole burden of disloyalty and ingratitude, which admits no protection nor excuse. And I humbly promise your majesty, that if either of those crimes be proved against me, I never will be so impudent as to importune you for my pardon. But if I be no otherwise guilty than a misinformation, or misfortune, many times makes men in this world; then I beg leave to think still, that I have been a faithful subject and servant to the king. And though I renounce all other worldly contentments, whilst the miseries of these times endure, wherein the king, your majesty, and the whole kingdom suffer so much that it would be a shame for any private man to be happy, and a sin to think himself so; yet there is one happiness that I may justify; therefore I aspire unto it, and humbly desire it of your majesty, that you will be pleased to think of me as of your majesty's most faithful and most obedient creature.

9th December, 1643.

LETTER XXV.

Algernon Sidney to his father Robert Earl of Leicester.

My Lord,

THE passage of letters from England hither is so uncertain, that I did not, until within these very few days, hear the sad news of my mother's death. I was then with the king of Sweden at Nyco-pin in Falster. This is the first opportunity I have had, of sending to condole with your lordship, a loss that is so great to yourself and your family; of which my sense was not so much diminished in being prepared by her long, languishing, and certainly incurable sickness, as increased by the last words and actions of her life. I confess, persons in such tempers are most fit to die, but they are also most wanted here; and we that for a while are left in the world are most apt, and perhaps with reason, to regret most the loss of those we most want. It may be, light and human passions are most suitably employed upon human and worldly things, wherein we have some sensible concernment; thoughts, absolutely abstracted from ourselves, are more suitable unto that steadiness of mind that is much spoken of, little sought, and never found, than that which is seen amongst men. It were a small compliment for me to offer your lordship to leave the employment in which I am, if I may in any thing be able to ease your lordship's solitude. If I could propose that to myself, I would cheerfully leave a condition of much more pleasure and advantage than I can with reason hope for.

LETTER XXVI.

Dr. Sharp to the Duke of Buckingham; with Queen Elizabeth's speech to her army at Tilbury Fort.

I REMEMBER, in eighty-eight, waiting upon the earl of Leicester at Tilbury camp, and in eighty-nine going into Portugal with my noble master, the earl of Essex, I learned somewhat fit to be imparted to your grace.

The queen, lying in the camp one night, guarded with her army, the old lord treasurer Burleigh came thither, and delivered to the earl the examina-

tion of Don Pedro, who was taken and brought in by sir Francis Drake, which examination the earl of Leicester delivered unto me to publish to the army in my next sermon. The sum of it was this :

Don Pedro being asked, what was the intent of their coming, stoutly answered the lords, What, but to subdue your nation, and root it out?

Good, said the lords; and what meant you then to do with the Catholics. He answered, We meant to send them (good men) directly unto Heaven, as all you that are heretics to Hell. Yea, but said the lords, What meant you to do with your whips of cord and wire? (whereof they had great store in their ships) What? said he; we meant to whip you heretics to death, that have assisted my master's rebels, and done such dishonours to our Catholic king and people. Yea, but what would you have done, said they, with their young children? They, said he, which were above seven years old, should have gone the way their fathers went; the rest should have lived, branded in the forehead with the letter L. for Lutheran, to perpetual bondage.

This, I take God to witness, I received of those great lords upon examination taken by the council, and by commandment delivered it to the army.

The queen, the next morning, rode through all the squadrons of her army, as armed Pallas, attended by noble footmen, Leicester, Essex, and Norris, then lord marshal, and divers other great lords, where she made an excellent oration to her army, which the next day after her departure I was commanded to redeliver to all the army together, to keep a public fast. Her words were these:—

“My loving people, we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourself to armed multitudes for fear of treachery: but I assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear; I have always so behaved myself, that under God I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects. And therefore I am come amongst you as you see at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all, to lay down for my God,

and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour, and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too; and think foul scorn, that Parma, or Spain, or any prince in Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which, rather than any dishonour should grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and we do assure you, in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time, my lieutenant general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject: not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdoms, and of my people.”

This I thought would delight your grace, and no man hath it but myself, and such as I have given it to; and therefore I made bold to send it unto you, if you have it not already.

LETTER XXVII.

Lord Bacon to James I.

It may please your most excellent majesty,

I do many times with gladness, and for a remedy of my other labours, revolve in my mind the great happiness which God (of his singular goodness) hath accumulated upon your majesty every way; and how complete the same would be, if the state of your means were once rectified and well ordered; your people military and obedient, fit for war, used to peace; your church enlightened with good preachers, as an heaven with stars; your judges learned, and learning from you; just, and just by your example; your nobility in a right distance between crown and people, no oppressors of the people, no overshadowers of the crown; your council full of tributes of care, faith, and freedom; your gentlemen and justices of peace willing to apply

your royal mandates to the nature of their several counties, but ready to obey; your servants in awe of your wisdom, in hope of your goodness; the fields growing every day, by the improvement and recovery of grounds, from the desert to the garden; the city grown from wood to brick; your sea-walls, or *pomerium* of your island surveyed, and in edifying; your merchants embracing the whole compass of the world, east, west, north, and south; the times giving you peace, and yet offering you opportunities of action abroad; and, lastly, your excellent royal issue entailing these blessings and favours of God to descend to all posterity. It resteth, therefore, that God having done so great things for your majesty, and you for others, you would do so much for yourself as to go through (according to your good beginnings) with the rectifying and settling of your estate and means, which only is wanting. *Hoc rebus deficit unum*. I, therefore, whom only love and duty to your majesty and your royal line hath made a financier, do intend to present unto your majesty a perfect book of your estate, like a perspective glass, to draw your estate near to your sight; beseeching your majesty to conceive, that if I have not attained to that that I would do in this which is not proper for me, nor in my element, I shall make your majesty amends in some other thing in which I am better bred. God ever preserve, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

Sir Walter Raleigh to James I.

It is one part of the office of a just and worthy prince to hear the complaints of his vassals, especially such as are in great misery. I know not, amongst many other presumptions gathered against me, how your majesty hath been persuaded that I was one of them who were greatly discontented, and therefore the more likely to prove disloyal. But the great God so relieve me in both worlds as I was the contrary; and I took as great comfort to behold your majesty, and always learned some good, and bettering my knowledge by hearing your majesty's discourse. I do most humbly beseech your sovereign majesty not to believe any of those in my particular, who, under pretence of offences to kings,

do easily work their particular revenge. I trust no man, under the colour of making examples, should persuade your majesty to leave the word *merciful* out of your style; for it will be no less profit to your majesty, and become your greatness, than the word *invincible*. It is true, that the laws of England are no less jealous of the kings than Cæsar was of Pompey's wife; for notwithstanding she was cleared for having company with Clæudius, yet for being suspected he condemned her. For myself, I protest before Almighty God, and I speak it to my master and sovereign, that I never invented treason against him; and yet I know I shall fall in *manibus eorum*, a *quibus non possum evadere*, unless by your majesty's gracious compassion I be sustained. Our law therefore, most merciful prince, knowing her own cruelty, and knowing that she is wont to compound treason out of presumptions and circumstances, doth give this charitable advice to the king her supreme, *Non solum sapiens esse sed et misericors*, &c. *Cum tutius sit reddere rationem misericordie quam judicii*. I do, therefore, on the knees of my heart beseech your majesty, from your own sweet and comfortable disposition, to remember that I have served your majesty twenty years, for which your majesty hath yet given me no reward: and it is fitter I should be indebted unto my sovereign lord, than the king to his poor vassal. Save me therefore, most merciful prince, that I may owe your majesty my life itself, than which there cannot be a greater debt. Limit me at least, my sovereign lord, that I may pay it for your service when your majesty shall please. If the law destroy me, your majesty shall put me out of your power, and I shall have none to fear but the King of kings.

LETTER XXIX.

Sir Walter Raleigh to Sir Robert Carr.

Sir,

AFTER many losses and many years sorrows, of both which I have cause to fear I was mistaken in their ends, it is come to my knowledge, that yourself (whom I know not but by an honourable favour) hath been persuaded to give me and mine my last fatal blow, by obtaining from his majesty the inheritance of my

children and nephews, lost in law for want of a word. This done, there remaineth nothing with me but the name of life. His majesty, whom I never offended (for I hold it unnatural and unmanlike to hate goodness), staid me at the grave's brink; not that I thought his majesty thought me worthy of many deaths, and to behold mine cast out of the world with myself, but as a king that knoweth the poor in truth, hath received a promise from God, that his throne shall be established.

And for you, sir, seeing your fair day is but in the dawn, mine drawn to the setting; your own virtues and the king's grace assuring you of many fortunes and much honour; I beseech you begin not your first building upon the ruins of the innocent, and let not mine and their sorrows attend your first plantation. I have ever been bound to your nation, as well for many other graces, as for the true report of my trial to the king's majesty; against whom had I been malignant, the hearing of my cause would not have changed enemies into friends, malice into compassion, and the minds of the greatest number then present into the commiseration of mine estate. It is not the nature of foul treason to beget such fair passions: neither could it agree with the duty and love of faithful subjects (especially of your nation) to bewail his overthrow that had conspired against their most natural and liberal lord. I therefore trust that you will not be the first that shall kill us outright, cut down the tree with the fruit, and undergo the curse of them that enter the fields of the fatherless; which, if it please you to know the truth, is far less in value than in fame. But that so worthy a gentleman as yourself will rather bind us to you (being six gentlemen not base in birth and alliance which have interest therein); and myself, with my uttermost thankfulness, will remain ready to obey your commandments.

LETTER XXX.

Sir Walter Raleigh to Prince Henry, son of James I.

May it please your highness,
THE following lines are addressed to your highness from a man who values

his liberty, and a very small fortune in a remote part of this island, under the present constitution, above all the riches and honours that he could any where enjoy under any other establishment.

You see, sir, the doctrines that are lately come into the world, and how far the phrase has obtained of calling your royal father, God's vicegerent; which ill men have turned both to the dishonour of God, and the impeachment of his majesty's goodness. They adjoin vicegerency to the idea of being all-powerful, and not to that of being all-good. His majesty's wisdom, it is to be hoped, will save him from the snare that may lie under gross adulations: but your youth, and the thirst of praise which I have observed in you, may possibly mislead you to hearken to these charmers, who would conduct your noble nature into tyranny. Be careful, O my prince! Hear them not, fly from their deceits; you are in the succession to a throne, from whence no evil can be imputed to you, but all good must be conveyed from you. Your father is called the vicegerent of Heaven; while he is good, he is the vicegerent of Heaven. Shall man have authority from the fountain of good to do evil? No, my prince; let mean and degenerate spirits, which want benevolence, suppose your power impaired by a disability of doing injuries. If want of power to do ill be an incapacity in a prince, with reverence be it spoken, it is an incapacity he has in common with the Deity. Let me not doubt but all pleas, which do not carry in them the mutual happiness of prince and people, will appear as absurd to your great understanding, as disagreeable to your noble nature. Exert yourself, O generous prince, against such sycophants, in the glorious cause of liberty; and assume such an ambition worthy of you, to secure your fellow-creatures from slavery; from a condition as much below that of brutes, as to act without reason is less miserable than to act against it. Preserve to your future subjects the divine right of free agents; and to your own royal house the divine right of being their benefactors. Believe me, my prince, there is no other right can flow from God. While your highness is forming yourself for a throne, consider the laws as so many common-places in your study of the science of government; when you mean nothing but justice they are an

ease and help to you. This way of thinking is what gave men the glorious appellations of deliverers and fathers of their country; this made the sight of them rouse their beholders into acclamations, and mankind incapable of bearing their very appearance, without applauding it as a benefit. Consider the inexpressible advantages which will ever attend your highness, while you make the power of rendering men happy the measure of your actions; while this is your impulse, how easily will that power be extended! The glance of your eye will give gladness, and your very sentence have a force of beauty. Whatever some men would insinuate, you have lost your subjects when you have lost their inclinations. You are to preside over the minds, not the bodies of men; the soul is the essence of the man, and you cannot have the true man against his inclinations. Chuse therefore to be the king or the conqueror of your people; it may be submission, but it cannot be obedience that is passive. I am, sir, your highness's most faithful servant.

London, Aug. 12, 1611.

LETTER XXXI.

Lord Bacon to James I. after his disgrace.

To the King.

It may please your most excellent Majesty,

IN the midst of my misery, which is rather assuaged by remembrance than by hope, my chiefest worldly comfort is to think, that since the time I had the first vote of the commons house of parliament for commissioner of the union, until the time that I was, by this last parliament, chosen by both houses for their messenger to your majesty in the petition of religion (which two were my first and last services), I was evermore so happy as to have my poor services graciously accepted by your majesty, and likewise not to have had any of them miscarry in my hands; neither of which points I can any wise take to myself, but ascribe the former to your majesty's goodness, and the latter to your prudent directions, which I was ever careful to have and keep. For, as I have often said to your majesty, I was towards you but as a bucket and cistern, to draw forth and conserve, whereas yourself was the foun-

tain. Unto this comfort of nineteen years prosperity, there succeeded a comfort even in my greatest adversity, somewhat of the same nature, which is, that in those offences wherewith I was charged, there was not any one that had special relation to your majesty, or any your particular commandments. For as towards Almighty God there are offences against the first and second table, and yet all against God; so with the servants of kings, there are offences more immediate against the sovereign, although all offences against law are also against the king. Unto which comfort there is added this circumstance, that as my faults were not against your majesty, otherwise than as all faults are; so my fall was not your majesty's act, otherwise than as all acts of justice are yours. This I write not to insinuate with your majesty, but as a most humble appeal to your majesty's gracious remembrance, how honest and direct you have ever found me in your service, whereby I have an assured belief, that there is in your majesty's own princely thoughts a great deal of serenity and clearness towards me, your majesty's now prostrate and cast down servant.

Neither, my most gracious sovereign, do I, by this mention of my former services, lay claim to your princely graces and bounty, though the privilege of calamity doth bear that form of petition. I know well, had they been much more, they had been but my bounden duty; nay, I must also confess, that they were from time to time, far above my merit, over and super-rewarded by your majesty's benefits, which you heaped upon me. Your majesty was and is that master to me, that raised and advanced me nine times, thrice in dignity, and six times in offices. The places were indeed the painfulest of all your services; but then they had both honour and profits; and the then profits might have maintained my now honours, if I had been wise; neither was your majesty's immediate liberality wanting towards me in some gifts, if I may hold them. All this I do most thankfully acknowledge, and do herewith conclude, that for any thing arising from myself to move your eye of pity towards me, there is much more in my present misery than in my past services; save that the same, your

majesty's goodness, that may give relief to the one, may give value to the other.

And, indeed, if it may please your majesty, this theme of my misery is so plentiful, as it need not be coupled with any thing else. I have been somebody by your majesty's singular and undeserved favour, even the prime officer of your kingdom. Your majesty's arm hath often been laid over mine in council, when you presided at the table; so near was I! I have borne your majesty's image in metal, much more in my heart. I was never, in nineteen years service, chidden by your majesty; but contrariwise, often overjoyed when your majesty would sometimes say, I was a good husband for you, though none for myself; sometimes, that I had a way to deal in business *suavibus modis*, which was the way which was most according to your own heart; and other most gracious speeches, of affections and trust, which I feed on to this day. But why should I speak of these things, which are now vanished, but only the better to express my downfal?

For now it is thus with me: I am a year and a half* old in misery; though I must ever acknowledge, not without some mixture of your majesty's grace and mercy. For I do not think it possible that any one, whom you once loved, should be totally miserable. Mine own means, through my own providence, are poor and weak, little better than my father left me. The poor things that I have had from your majesty are either in question or at courtesy. My dignities remain marks of your past favour, but burdens of my present fortune. The poor remnants which I had of my former fortunes in plate or jewels, I have spread upon poor men unto whom I owed, scarce leaving myself a convenient subsistence; so as to conclude, I must pour out my misery before your majesty so far as to say, *Si tu deseris, perimus*.

But as I can offer to your majesty's compassion little arising from myself to move you, except it be my extreme misery, which I have truly opened: so looking up to your majesty's own self, I should think I committed Cain's fault, if I should despair. Your majesty is a king whose heart is as unscrutable for

secret motions of goodness, as for depth of wisdom. You are creator-like, factive not destructive: you are the prince in whom hath ever been noted an aversion against any thing that favoured of an hard heart: as on the other side, your princely eye was wont to meet with any motion that was made on the relieving part. Therefore, as one that hath had the happiness to know your majesty near-hand, I have, most gracious sovereign, faith enough for a miracle, and much more for a grace, that your majesty will not suffer your poor creature to be utterly defaced, nor blot the name quite out of your book, upon which your sacred hand hath been so oft for the giving him new ornaments and additions.

Unto this degree of compassion, I hope God (of whose mercy towards me, both in my prosperity and adversity, I have had great testimonies and pledges, though mine own manifold and wretched unthankfulness might have averted them) will dispose your princely heart, already prepared to all piety you shall do for me†. And as all commiserable persons (especially such as find their hearts void of all malice) are apt to think that all men pity them, so I assure myself that the lords of your council, who, out of their wisdom and nobleness, cannot but be sensible of human events, will in this way which I go for the relief of my estate, further and advance your majesty's goodness towards me; for there is, as I conceive, a kind of fraternity between great men that are, and those that have been, being but the several tenses of one verb. Nay, I do farther presume, that both houses of parliament will love their justice the better, if it end not in my ruin: for I have been often told by many of my lords, as it were in the way of excusing the severity of the sentence, that they know they left me in good hands. And your majesty knoweth well I have been all my life long acceptable to those assemblies: not by flattery, but by moderation, and by honest expressing of a desire to have all things go fairly and well.

But if it may please your majesty (for saints I shall give them reverence, but no adoration; my address is to your

* Therefore this was wrote near the middle of the year 1622.

† Vouchsafe to express towards me.

majesty, the fountain of goodness) your majesty shall, by the grace of God, not feel that in gift which I shall extremely feel in help; for my desires are moderate, and my courses measured to a life orderly and reserved, hoping still to do your majesty honour in my way; only I most humbly beseech your majesty to give me leave to conclude with these words, which necessity speaketh: Help me, dear sovereign, lord and master, and pity so far, as that I, that have borne a bag, be not now in my age, forced in effect to bear a wallet; nor that I, that desire to live to study, may not be driven to study to live. I most humbly crave pardon of a long letter after a long silence. God of heaven ever bless, preserve, and prosper your majesty. Your majesty's poor ancient servant and bedsmān.

LETTER XXXII.

Lord Baltimore to Lord Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford.

My lord,

WERE not my occasions such as necessarily keep me here at this time, I would not send letters, but fly to you myself with all the speed I could, to express my own grief, and to take part of yours, which I know is exceedingly great, for the loss of so noble a lady, so virtuous and so loving a wife. There are few, perhaps, can judge of it better than I, who have been a long time myself a man of sorrows. But all things, my lord, in this world pass away *statutum est*, wife, children, honour, wealth, friends, and what else is dear to flesh and blood; they are but lent us till God please to call for them back again, that we may not esteem any thing our own, or set our hearts upon any thing but him alone, who only remains for ever. I beseech his almighty goodness to grant that your lordship may, for his sake, bear this great cross with meekness and patience, whose only son, our dear Lord and Saviour, bore a greater for you; and to consider that these humiliations, though they be very bitter, yet are they sovereign medicines ministered unto us by our heavenly physician to cure the sicknesses of our souls, if the fault be not ours. Good my lord, bear with this excess of zeal in a friend whose great af-

fection to you transports him to dwell longer upon this melancholy theme than is needful to your lordship, whose own wisdom, assisted with God's grace, I hope, suggests unto you these and better resolutions than I can offer unto your remembrance. All I have to say more is but this, that I humbly and heartily pray for you to dispose of yourself and your affairs (the rites being done to the noble creature) as to be able to remove, as soon as conveniently you may, from those parts, where so many things represent themselves unto you, as to make your wound bleed afresh; and let us have you here, where the gracious welcome of your master, the conversation of your friends, and variety of businesses, may divert your thoughts the sooner from sad objects; the continuance whereof will but endanger your health, on which depends the welfare of your children, the comfort of your friends, and many other good things, for which I hope God will reserve you, to whose divine favour I humbly recommend you, and remain ever your lordship's most affectionate and faithful servant.

From my lodging in Lincoln-Inn-Fields, Oct. 11, 1631.

LETTER XXXIII.

Lord Wentworth to Archbishop Laud.

May it please your grace,

I AM gotten hither to a poor house I have, having been this last week almost feasted to death at York. In truth, for any thing I can find, they were not ill pleased to see me. Sure I am, it much contented me to be amongst my old acquaintance, which I would not leave for any other affection I have, but to that which I both profess and owe to the person of his sacred majesty. Lord! with what quietness in myself could I live in comparison of that noise and labour I met with elsewhere; and I protest put up more crowns in my purse at the year's end too. But we'll let that pass. For I am not like to enjoy that blessed condition upon earth. And therefore my resolution is set, to endure and struggle with it so long as this crazy body will bear it; and finally drop into the silent grave, where both all these (which I now could, as I think, innocently de-

light myself in) and myself are to be forgotten; and fare them well. I persuade myself *exuto lepido* I am able to lay them down very quietly, and yet leave behind me, as a truth not to be forgotten, a perfect and full remembrance of my being your grace's most humbly to be commanded.

Gawthorp, the 17th of Aug. 1636.

LETTER XXXIV.

Charles I. to Lord Wentworth.

Wentworth,

CERTAINLY I should be much to blame not to admit so good a servant as you are to speak with me, since I deny it to none that there is not a just exception against; yet I must freely tell you, that the cause of this desire of yours, if it be known, will rather hearten than discourage your enemies; for, if they can once find that you apprehend the dark setting of a storm, when I say No, they will make you leave to care for any thing in a short while but for your fears. And, believe it, the marks of my favours that stop malicious tongues are neither places nor titles, but the little welcome I give to accusers, and the willing ear I give to my servants; this is, not to disparage those favours (for envy flies most at the fairest mark), but to shew their use; to wit, not to quell envy, but to reward service; it being truly so, when the master without the servant's importunity does it; otherwise men judge it more to proceed from the servant's wit, than the master's favour. I will end with a rule, that may serve for a statesman, a courtier, or a lover: Never make a defence or apology before you be accused. And so I rest your assured friend.

Lindhurst, 3d Sept. 1636.

For my lord marshal, as you have armed me, so I warrant you.

LETTER XXXV.

Charles I. to the Earl of Strafford.

Strafford,

THE misfortune that is fallen upon you by the strange mistaking and conjuncture of these times being such, that I must

lay by the thought of employing you hereafter in my affairs; yet I cannot satisfy myself in honour or conscience, without assuring you (now in the midst of your troubles) that, upon the word of a king, you shall not suffer in life, honour, or fortune. This is but justice, and therefore a very mean reward from a master to so faithful and able a servant as you have shewed yourself to be; yet it is as much as I conceive the present times will permit, though none shall hinder me from being your constant faithful friend.

Whitehall, April 23, 1641.

LETTER XXXVI.

Earl of Strafford to his Son.

My dearest Will,

THESE are the last lines that you are to receive from a father that tenderly loves you. I wish there were a greater leisure to impart my mind unto you; but our merciful God will supply all things by his grace, and guide and protect you in all your ways: to whose infinite goodness I bequeath you; and therefore be not discouraged, but serve him, and trust in him, and he will preserve and prosper you in all things.

Be sure you give all respect to my wife, that hath ever had a great love unto you, and therefore will be well becoming you. Never be wanting in your love and care to your sisters, but let them ever be most dear unto you; for this will give others cause to esteem and respect you for it, and is a duty that you owe them in the memory of your excellent mother and myself; therefore your care and affection to them must be the very same that you are to have of yourself; and the like regard must you have to your youngest sister; for indeed you owe it to her also both for her father and mother's sake.

Sweet Will, be careful to take the advice of those friends which are by me desired to advise you for your education. Serve God diligently morning and evening, and recommend yourself unto him, and have him before your eyes in all your ways. With patience here the instructions of those friends I leave with you, and diligently follow their counsel; for, till you come by time to have ex-

perience in the world, it will be far more safe to trust to their judgments than your own.

Lose not the time of your youth, but gather those seeds of virtue and knowledge which may be of use to yourself, and comfort to your friends, for the rest of your life. And that this may be the better effected, attend thereunto with patience, and be sure to correct and refrain yourself from anger. Suffer not sorrow to cast you down, but with cheerfulness and good courage go on the race you have to run in all sobriety and truth. Be sure with an hallowed care to have respect to all the commandments of God, and give not yourself to neglect them in the least things, lest by degrees you come to forget them in the greatest; for the heart of a man is deceitful above all things. And in all your duties and devotions towards God, rather perform them joyfully than pensively, for God loves a cheerful giver. For your religion, let it be directed according to that which shall be taught by those which are in God's church, the proper teachers, therefore, rather than that you ever either fancy one to yourself, or be led by men that are singular in their own opinions, and delight to go ways of their own finding out; for you will certainly find soberness and truth in the one, and much unsteadiness and vanity in the other.

The king, I trust, will deal graciously with you, restore you those honours and that fortune which a distempered time hath deprived you of, together with the life of your father: which I rather advise might be by a new gift and creation from himself, than by any other means, to the end you may pay the thanks to him without having obligation to any other.

Be sure you avoid as much as you can to inquire after those that have been sharp in their judgments towards me; and I charge you never to suffer thought of revenge to enter your heart; but be careful to be informed who were my friends in this prosecution, and to them apply yourself to make them your friends also; and on such you may rely, and bestow much of your conversation amongst them.

And God Almighty of his infinite goodness bless you and your children's children; and his same goodness bless

your sisters in like manner, perfect you in every good work, and give you right understandings in all things. Amen. Your most loving father.

Tower, this 11th of May, 1641.

You must not fail to behave yourself towards my lady Clare, your grandmother, with all duty and observance; for most tenderly doth she love you, and hath been passing kind unto me: God reward her charity for it. And both in this and all the rest, the same that I counsel you, the same do I direct also to your sisters, that so the same may be observed by you all. And once more do I, from my very soul, beseech our gracious God to bless and govern you in all, to the saving you in the day of his visitation, and join us again in the communion of his blessed saints, where is fulness of joy and bliss for evermore. Amen, Amen.

LETTER XXXVII.

James, Earl of Derby, to Commissary General Ireton, in answer to the summons sent the Earl to deliver up the Isle of Man.

Sir,

I HAVE received your letter with indignation, and with scorn return you this answer: That I cannot but wonder whence you should gather any hopes that I should prove, like you, treacherous to my sovereign; since you cannot be ignorant of the manifest candour of my former actings in his late majesty's service, from which principles of loyalty I am no whit departed. I scorn your proffer; I disdain your favour; I abhor your reason; and am so far from delivering up this island to your advantage, that I shall keep it to the utmost of my power, and, I hope, to your destruction. Take this for your final answer, and forbear any further solicitations; for if you trouble me with any more messages of this nature, I will burn your paper, and hang up your messenger. This is the immutable resolution, and shall be the undoubted practice, of him who accounts it his chiefest glory, to be his majesty's most loyal obedient subject.

From Castle-Town, this 12th July, 1649.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Charles II. to the Duke of York.

Dear brother,

I HAVE received yours without a date, in which you mention that Mr. Montague has endeavoured to pervert you in your religion. I do not doubt but you remember very well the commands I left with you at my going away concerning that point, and am confident you will observe them. Yet the letters that come from Paris say, that it is the queen's purpose to do all she can to change your religion, which, if you hearken to her, or any body else in that matter, you must never think to see England or me again; and whatsoever mischief shall fall on me or my affairs from this time, I must lay all upon you, as being the only cause of it. Therefore consider well what it is, not only to be the cause of ruining a brother that loves you so well, but also of your king and country. Do not let them persuade you either by force or fair promises; for the first they neither dare nor will use; and for the second, as soon as they have perverted you, they will have their end, and will care no more for you.

I am also informed, that there is a purport to put you in the Jesuit's college, which I command you upon the same grounds never to consent unto. And whensoever any body shall go to dispute with you in religion, do not answer them at all; for though you have the reason on your side, yet they being prepared will have the advantage of any body that is not upon the same security that they are. If you do not consider what I say to you, remember the last words of your dead father, which were, to be constant to your religion, and never to be shaken in it; which if you do not observe, this shall be the last time you will ever hear from, dear brother, your most affectionate brother.

Cologne, Nov. 10, 1654.

LETTER XXXIX.

Oliver Cromwell to his Son H. Cromwell.

Son,

I HAVE seen your letter written unto

Mr. secretary Thurloe, and do find thereby that you are very apprehensive of the carriage of some persons with you towards yourself and the public affairs. I do believe there may be some particular persons who are not very well pleased with the present condition of things, and may be apt to shew their discontent as they have opportunity; but this should not make too great impressions on you. Time and patience may work them to a better frame of spirit, and bring them to see that which for the present seems to be hid from them; especially if they shall see your moderation and love towards them, whilst they are found in other ways towards you: which I earnestly desire you to study and endeavour all that lies in you, whereof both you and I too shall have the comfort, whatsoever the issue and event thereof be.

For what you write of more help, I have long endeavoured it, and shall not be wanting to send you some further addition to the council as soon as men can be found out who are fit for that trust. I am also thinking of sending over to you a fit person, who may command the north of Ireland, which I believe stands in great need of one, and am of your opinion, that Trevor and Colonel Mervin are very dangerous persons, and may be made the heads of a new rebellion; and therefore I would have you move the council, that they be secured in some very safe place, and the farther out of their own countries the better. I commend you to the Lord, and rest your affectionate father.

21 Nov. 1655.

LETTER XL.

Lady Mary Cromwell to Henry Cromwell.

Dear brother,

Your kind letters do so much engage my heart towards you, that I can never tell how to express in writing the true affection and value I have of you, who truly I think none that knows you but you may justly claim it from. I must confess myself in a great fault in the omitting of writing to you and your dear wife so long a time; but I suppose you cannot be ignorant of the reason, which truly has been the only cause, which is this business of my sister Frances and Mr.

Rich. Truly I can truly say it, for these three months I think our family, and myself in particular, have been in the greatest confusion and trouble as ever poor family can be in; the Lord tell us his * * * in it, and settle us, and make us what he would have us to be. I suppose you heard of the breaking off the business, and according to your desire in your last letter, as well as I can, I shall give you a full account of it, which is this; After a quarter of a year's admissions, my father and my lord Warwick began to treat about the estate, and it seems my lord did not offer that that my father expected. I need not name particulars, for I suppose you may have had it from better hands; but if I may say the truth, I think it was not so much estate as some private reasons, that my father discovered to none but my sister Frances, and his own family, which was a dislike to the young person, which he had from some reports of his being a vicious man, given to play and such like things, which office was done by some that had a mind to break off the match. My sister, hearing these things, was resolved to know the truth of it, and truly did find all the reports to be false that were raised of him; and to tell you the truth, they were so much engaged in affection before this, that she could not think of breaking of it off; so that my sister engaged me, and all the friends she had, who truly were very few, to speak in her behalf to my father; which we did, but could not be heard to any purpose; only this my father promised, that if he were satisfied as to the report, the estate should not break it off, which she was satisfied with; but after this there was a second treaty, and my lord Warwick desired my father to name what it was he demanded more, and to his utmost he would satisfy him; so my father upon this made new propositions, which my lord Warwick has answered as much as he can; but it seems there is five hundred pounds a year in my lord Rich's hands, which he has power to sell; and there are some people that persuaded his highness, that it would be dishonourable for him to conclude of it without these five hundred pounds a year be settled upon Mr. Rich after his father's death, and my lord Rich having no esteem at all of his son, because he is not as bad as himself, will not agree to it;

and these people upon this persuade my father, it would be a dishonour to him to yield upon these terms; it would shew, that he was made a fool on by my lord Rich; which the truth is, how it should be, I cannot understand, nor very few else; and truly I must tell you privately, that they are so far engaged, as the match cannot be broke off. She acquainted none of her friends with her resolution when she did it. Dear brother, this is as far as I can tell the state of the business. The Lord direct them what to do; and all I think ought to beg of God to pardon her in her doing of this thing, which I must say truly, she was put upon by the * * * of things. Dear, let me beg my excuses to my sister for not writing my best respects to her. Pardon this trouble, and believe me, that I shall ever strive to approve myself, dear brother, your affectionate sister and servant.

June 23, 1656.

LETTER XLI.

Henry Cromwell to Lord Faulconberg.

Sept. 8, 1658.

My lord,
ALTHOUGH the last letters brought a very sad memento of mortality, yet I was not well enough prepared to receive yours by this post, without (it may be) too much consternation. I know the highest griefs arising from my natural affection to my dear father ought so far to give way, as to let me remember my present station; but I see more of this kind than I am able to practise; and truly when I recollect myself, and consider the desperate distractions which so nearly threaten us, I am quite lost in the way to the remedy. For I may truly tell your lordship, that either through the design or unfaithfulness of my friends, or through their ignorance and incompetency for a work of that nature, I have never been acquainted with the inside either of things or persons, but fobbed off with intelligence about as much differing from Mabbot, as he from a Diurnall; so that I can contribute little to prevent our danger, more than by my prayers, and keeping the army and people under my charge in a good frame. I wish yours may be so

kept in England. Methinks some begin their meetings very early. It may be they intend to give the law; but if they do not keep to what is honest, they may meet with disappointments. I do heartily thank your lordship for your freedom and confidence in me. I am sure I cannot plead merit, but shall be glad to cherish that sympathy, or whatever else it is that makes me yours. I hope I shall always be just to your lordship. Some late letters do a little revive us, and give hopes of his highness's recovery; yet my trouble is exceeding great. I remain, &c.

LETTER XLII.

Lord Broghill to Secretary Thurloe.

Dear sir,

THOUGH I did on Monday last trouble you with a letter, yet having now also received the honour of another from you of the seventh instant, I could not but pay you my humble and hearty acknowledgments for it, and that in such a deep affliction as that you are under, and that load of business you support, you can yet oblige with your letters a person so unworthy of them, and so insignificant as I am. Your last is so express a picture of sorrow, that none could draw it so well that did not feel it. I know our late loss wounds deeply both the public and yourself, and yourself more upon the public account than your own. But I think sorrow for friends is more tolerable while they are dying than after they are dead. David's servants reasoned as ill as he himself did well; they concluded, if his grief were such when the child was but in danger of death, what would it be when he knew it was dead? He took and considered the thing another way; whilst there was life, that is, whilst the will of God was not declared, he thought it a duty to endeavour to move the mercy of God by his prayers and sorrow; but when God's pleasure was declared, he knew it was a duty cheerfully to yield unto it. I know, in the cause of grief now before us, I am the unfittest of any to offer comfort, which I need as much as any; and I know it is as unfit to offer to present it you, who, as you need it most of any, so you are ablest to afford it others above any: however, this one consider-

ation of David's actings I could not but lay before you, it having proved an effectual consolation to me in the death of one I but too much loved. But I hope your sorrow for what is past does not drown your care for what is to come; nay, I am confident of it; for you that can in your sorrow and business mind me, makes me know your grief hinders us not from enjoying the accustomed effects of your care to the public; and while what we pay the dead does not obstruct what we owe the living, such sorrow is a debt, and not a fault.

In this nation his highness has been proclaimed in most of the considerable places already, and in others he is daily a proclaiming, and indeed with signal demonstrations of love to his person, and of hope of happiness under his government.

I heartily join in all the good you say of him, and hope with you he will be happy if his friends stiek to him; amongst all those I know you will; and I know all promises with me are not kept, if you are not reckoned by him in the first rank, of which I have presumed to mind him in a letter I took the confidence to write unto him this week.

But, I fear, while I thus trouble you, I give the honour of your letters a very disproportionate return; and therefore I will only now subscribe myself, what I am from the bottom of my heart, dear sir, your most humble, most faithful, and most obliged affectionate servant.

Ballymallo, the 17th of September,
1658.

LETTER XLIII.

Henry Cromwell to Richard Cromwell, Protector.

Sept. 21, 1658.

May it please your highness, I RECEIVED a letter from your highness by Mr. Underwood, who, according to your commands, hath given me a particular account of the sickness and death of his late highness, my dear father, which was such an amazing stroke that it did deeply affect the heart of every man, much more may it do those of a nearer relation. And indeed, for my own part, I am so astonished at it, that I know not what to say or write upon

this so sad and grievous occasion. I know it is our duties upon all accounts to give submission to the will of God, and to be awakened by this mighty noise from the Lord to look into our own hearts and ways, and to put our mouths in the dust, acknowledging our own vileness and sinfulness before him; that so, if possible, we may thereby yet obtain mercy from him for ourselves and these poor nations. As this stroke was very stupendous, so the happy news of his late highness leaving us so hopeful a foundation for our future peace, in appointing your highness his successor, coming along with it to us, did not a little allay the other. For my part I can truly say I was relieved by it, not only upon the public consideration, but even upon the account of the goodness of God to our poor family, who hath preserved us from the contempt of our enemy. I gave a late account to Mr. secretary Thurloe of what passed about the proclaiming your highness here, which, I may say without vanity, was with as great joy and general satisfaction, as I believe in the best affected places in England. I doubt not but to give your highness as good an account of the rest of the places in Ireland, so soon as the proclamations are returned. I did also give some account of the speedy compliance of the army, whose obedience your highness may justly require at my hands. Now, that the God and Father of your late father and mine, and your highness's predecessor, would support you, and by pouring down a double portion of the same spirit which was so eminently upon him, would enable you to walk in his steps, and to do worthily for his name, cause, and people, and continually preserve you in so doing, is and shall be the fervent and daily prayer of yours, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

The Hon. Algernon Sidney to his friend.

Sir,

I AM sorry I cannot in all things conform myself to the advices of my friends; if theirs had any joint concernment with mine, I would willingly submit my interest to theirs; but when I alone am interested, and they only advise me to come over as soon as the act of indem-

nity is passed, because they think it is best for me, I cannot wholly lay aside my own judgment and choice. I confess, we are naturally inclined to delight in our own country, and I have a particular love to mine; and I hope I have given some testimony of it. I think that being exiled from it is a great evil, and would redeem myself from it with the loss of a great deal of my blood; but when that country of mine, which used to be esteemed a paradise, is now likely to be made a stage of injury; the liberty which we hoped to establish oppressed, all manner of profaneness, looseness, luxury, and lewdness set up in its height; instead of piety, virtue, sobriety, and modesty, which we hoped God, by our hands, would have introduced; the best of our nation made a prey to the worst; the parliament, court, and army corrupted, the people enslaved, all things vendible, and no man safe, but by such evil and infamous means as flattery and bribery; what joy can I have in my own country in this condition! Is it a pleasure to see all that I love in the world sold and destroyed? Shall I renounce all my old principles, learn the vile court arts, and make my peace by bribing some of them? Shall their corruption and vice be my safety? Ah! no; better is a life among strangers, than in my own country upon such conditions.—Whilst I live, I will endeavour to preserve my liberty; or, at least, not consent to the destroying of it. I hope I shall die in the same principles in which I have lived, and will live no longer than they can preserve me. I have in my life been guilty of many follies, but, as I think, of no meanness. I will not blot and defile that which is past, by endeavouring to provide for the future. I have ever had in my mind, that when God should cast me into such a condition, as that I cannot save my life, but by doing an indecent thing, he shews me the time is come wherein I should resign it. And when I cannot live in my own country, but by such means as are worse than dying in it, I think he shews me I ought to keep myself out of it. Let them please themselves with making the king glorious, who think a whole people may justly be sacrificed for the interest and pleasure of one man, and a few of his followers; let them rejoice in

their subtilty, who, by betraying the former powers, have gained the favour of this, not only preserved but advanced themselves in those dangerous changes. Nevertheless (perhaps) they may find the king's glory is their shame, his plenty the people's misery: and that the gaining of an office, or a little money, is a poor reward for destroying a nation, which if it were preserved in liberty and virtue, would truly be the most glorious in the world! and that others may find they have, with much pains, purchased their own shame and misery: a dear price paid for that which is not worth keeping, nor the life that is accompanied with it. The honour of English parliaments has ever been in making the nation glorious and happy, not in selling and destroying the interest of it, to satisfy the lusts of one man. Miserable nation! that, from so great a height of glory, is fallen into the most despicable condition in the world, of having all its good depending upon the breath and will of the vilest persons in it! Cheated and sold by them they trusted! Infamous traffic, equal almost in guilt to that of Judas! In all preceding ages, parliaments have been the pillars of our liberty, the sure defenders of the oppressed: they who formerly could bridle kings, and keep the balance equal between them and the people, are now become the instruments of all our oppressions, and a sword in his hand to destroy us; they themselves, led by a few interested persons, who are willing to buy offices for themselves by the misery of the whole nation, and the blood of the most worthy and eminent persons in it. Detestable bribes, worse than the oaths now in fashion in this mercenary court! I mean to owe neither my life nor liberty to any such means: when the innocence of my actions will not protect me, I will stay away till the storm be over-passed. In short, where Vane, Lambert, and Haslerigg cannot live in safety, I cannot live at all. If I had been in England, I should have expected a lodging with them: or, though they may be the first, as being more eminent than I, I must expect to follow their example in suffering, as I have been their companion in acting. I am most in amaze at the mistaken informations that were sent to me by my friends, full of expectations, of favours, and employ-

ments. Who can think, that they, who imprison them, would employ me, or suffer me to live when they are put to death? If I might live, and employed, can it be expected that I should serve a government that seeks such detestable ways of establishing itself? Ah! no; I have not learnt to make my own peace, by persecuting and betraying my brethren, more innocent and worthy than myself. I must live by just means, and serve to just ends, or not at all, after such a manifestation of the ways by which it is intended the king shall govern. I should have renounced any place of favour into which the kindness and industry of my friends might have advanced me, when I found those that were better than I were only fit to be destroyed. I had formerly some jealousies, the fraudulent proclamation for indemnity increased the imprisonment of those three men; and turning out of all the officers of the army, contrary to promise, confirmed me in my resolutions not to return.

To conclude; the tide is not to be diverted, nor the oppressed delivered; but God, in his time, will have mercy on his people; he will save and defend them, and avenge the blood of those who shall now perish, upon the heads of those who, in their pride, think nothing is able to oppose them. Happy are those whom God shall make instruments of his justice in so blessed a work. If I can live to see that day, I shall be ripe for the grave, and able to say with joy, Lord! now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, &c. (So sir Arthur Haslerigg on Oliver's death.) Farewell. My thoughts as to king and state, depending upon their actions, no man shall be a more faithful servant to him than I, if he make the good and prosperity of his people his glory; none more his enemy, if he doth the contrary. To my particular friends I shall be constant in all occasions, and to you a most affectionate servant.

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Boyle to the Countess of Ranclagh.

My dear sister,
If I were of those scribblers' humour who love to put themselves to one trouble, to put their friends to another;

and who weekly break their silence, only to acquaint us with their unwillingness to keep it; I must confess I had much oftener written you letters not worth the reading. But having ever looked upon silence and respect as things as near of kin as importunity and affection, I elected rather to trust to your good opinion, to your good-nature, than your patience with my letters: for which to suppose a welcome, must have presumed a greater kindness, than they could have exprest. For I am grown so perfect a villager, and live so removed, not only from the roads, but from the very bye-paths of intelligence; that to entertain you with our country discourse, would have extremely puzzled me, since your children have not the rickets nor the measles; and as for news, I could not have sent you so much as that of my being well. To beseech you not to forget me, were but a bad compliment to your constancy; and to tell you I remember you, were a worse to my own judgment; and compliments of the other nature it were not easy for me to write from Stalbridge, and less easy to write to you: so that wanting all themes and strains, that might enable me to fill my letters with any thing that might pay the patience of reading them, I thought it pardonabler to say nothing by a respectful silence, than by idle words. But the causes being just so many excuses of that silence, I should have more need to apologize for my letters, if these seemed not necessary to prevent the misconstruction of their unfrequency; and if I did not send up the antidote with them, in the company of my brother Frank; by whom it were equally incongruous and unseasonable to send you no epistle, and to send you a long one; which (latter) that this may not prove, I must hasten to assure you, that though I have not very lately written you any common letters, it is not long since I was writing you a dedicatory one, which may (possibly) have the happiness to convey your name to posterity; and having told you this, I shall next take post to beseech you to believe, that whensoever you shall please to vouchsafe me the honour of your commands, my glad and exact obedience shall convince you, that though many others may oftener renew

their bonds, I can esteem myself, by a single note under my hand, equally engaged to you for all the services that may become the relation, and justify the professions, that style me, my dear sister, your most affectionate brother, and faithful humble servant, R. B.

Stalbridge, this 13th Nov. 1646.

LETTER XLVI.

From the same to the same.

My sister,
I HAVE ever counted it amongst the highest infelicities of friendship, that it increasingly reflects upon us our imparted griefs; for if our friends appear unconcerned in them, that indifference offends us, and if they resent them, sympathy afflicts us. This consideration, concurring with my native disposition, has made me shy of disclosing my afflictions, where I could not expect their redress; being too proud to seek a relief in the being thought to need it, and too good a friend to find a satisfaction in their griefs I love, or to remit of the ill-natured consolation of seeing others wretched as well as I. This humour may in part inform you of the cause of my silence, and, I hope, in part excuse it; but I am not now at leisure to make apologies, though I will assure you I decline the employment for want of time, not justice. Since I wrote to you last, I was unlikely enough ever to be in a condition to write to you again; and my danger was so sudden and unexpected, that nothing could transcend it, except theirs, whose dilatory conversion makes them trust eternity to the uncertain improvement of a future contingent minute of a life obnoxious to numerous casualties, as impossible (almost) to be numbered as avoided. What God has decreed of me, himself best knows; for my part, I shall still pray for a perfect resignation to his blessed will, and a resembling acquiescence in it; and I hope his Spirit will so conform me to his dispensations, that I may cheerfully, by his assignment, either continue my work, or ascend to receive my wages. And in this I must implore the assistance of your fervent prayers, dear sister, which I am confident will both find a shorter

way to heaven, and be better welcomed there. These three or four weeks I have been troubled with the visits of a quotidian ague, which yet had not the power to hinder me from three or four journeys to serve Frank, and wait upon my dear Broghill, nor from continuing my Vulcanian feat; and, in the intervals of my fits, I both began and made some progress in the promised discourse of Public Spiritedness; but now truly weakness, and the doctor's prescription, have cast my pen into the fire; though, in spite of their menaces, I sometimes presume to snatch it out a while, and blot some paper with it. My present employment is, the reviewing some consolatory thoughts on the loss of friends, which my poor lady Susan's death obliged me to entertain myself with, and which I am now recruiting. If ever I finish them, I shall trouble you to read them; and if I do not, beseech you to make use of them. The melancholy, which some have been pleased to misrepresent to you as the cause of my distemper, is certainly much more the effect of them: neither is it either of that quality or that degree you apprehend, but much more just than dangerous: yet, to obey you, I shall endeavour a divorce; and, as the properest means, endeavour to wait upon you; in order to which, I came this night in a litter to this town, whence I intend not to dislodge, till God's blessing upon the remedies enable me to do it on horseback. The kindness you expressed, in the letter I received this morning, has brought me so high a consolation, that I should think it cheaply purchased by the occasion of it, if I had ignored that the sole want of suitable opportunities restrained the frequency of resembling strains; and if I were not too well acquainted with the greatness of your goodness, not to derive a higher joy from your obliging proffers, as they are effects of your friendship, than testimonies of it. But though I value the blessing of your company at the rate of having the happiness of more than an indifferent acquaintance with you, I cannot consent to purchase my felicity (if such a thing could be done) by your disquiet: for your remove will not more certainly discompose your family, than

it will be useless or unnecessary to me; the nature of my disease being such, that it will either frustrate your visit, or allow me to do so; for if in a very short time it destroy not, it will leave me strength enough to fetch a perfect cure of it at London, whither in spite of my present distempers, which are not small, nor (I fear) very fugitive, the physicians would persuade me that, by God's assistance, I may be able to crawl in a short time. I shall beseech you therefore not to stir, until you hear further either from me, or of me; and to believe, that though your visits are favours of too precious a quality to be fully receivable from your intention only, yet my concern in your quiet will make me (in the purposed journey) more welcomely resent your design than your presence. I hope you will pardon the disorder of this scribble to that of the writer, who is not only weary of his journey, but is at present troubled with a fit of his ague, which yet being but a sickness, cannot impair an affection, which will be sure to keep me really and unalterably till death, my dearest, dearest, dearest sister, your most affectionate brother and humble servant, R. B.

Bath, August 2, 1649, late at night.

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. Boyle to the Countess of Ranelagh.

My sister,
I must confess that I should be as much in debt for your letters, though I had answered every one of yours, as he is in his creditor's, who for two angels has paid back but two shillings: for certainly, if any where, it is in the ductions of the mind, that the quality ought to measure extent, and assign number and equity to multiply excellency, where wit has contracted it. I could easily evince this truth, and the justness of the application too, did I not apprehend that your modesty would make you mind me, that the nature of my disease forbids all strains. I am here, God be praised, upon the mending hand, though not yet exempted from either pain or fears; the latter of which I could wish (but believe not) as much enemies to my

reason, as I find the former to my quiet. I intend notwithstanding, by God's blessing, as soon as I have here recruited and refreshed my purse and self, to accomplish my designed removal to London: my hoped arrival at which I look on with more joy, as a fruit of my recovery, than a testimony of it. Sir William and his son went hence this morning, having by the favour (or rather charity) of a visit, made me some compensation for the many I have lately received from persons, whose visitations (I think I may call them), in spite of my averseness to physic, make me find a greater trouble in the congratulations, than the instruments of my recovery. You will pardon, perhaps, the bitterness of this expression, when I have told you, that having spent most of this week in drawing (for my particular use) a quintessence of wormwood, those disturbers of my work might easily shake some few drops into my ink. I will not now presume to entertain you with those moral speculations, with which my chemical practices have entertained me; but if this last sickness had not diverted me, I had before this presented you with a discourse (which my vanity made me hope would not have displeased you) of the theological use of natural philosophy, endeavouring to make the contemplation of the creatures contributory to the instruction of the prince, and to the glory of the author of them. But my blood has so thickened my ink, that I cannot yet make it run; and my thoughts of improving the creatures have been very much displaced by those of leaving them. Nor has my disease been more guilty of my oblivion, than my employment since it has begun to release me: for Vulcan has so transported and bewitched me, that as the delights I taste in it make me fancy my laboratory a kind of Elysium, so as if the threshold of it possessed the quality the poets ascribed to that Lethe, their fictions made men taste of before their entrance into those seats of bliss, I there forget my standish and my books, and almost all things, but the unchangeable resolution I have made of continuing till death, sister, your

R. B.

Stalb. Aug. the last, 1649.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. Boyle to Lord Broghill.

My dearest governor,

I RECEIVE in our separation as much of happiness as is consistent with it, in hearing of you in so glorious, and from you in so obliging a way; and in being assured, by your letters and your actions, how true you are to your friendship and your gallantry. I am not a little satisfied to find, that since you were reduced to leave your Parthenissa, your successes have so happily emulated or continued the story of Artabanus; and that you have now given romances as well credit as reputation. Nor am I moderately pleased, to see you as good at reducing towns in Munster as Assyria, and to find your eloquence as prevalent with masters of garrisons as mistresses of hearts; for I esteem the former both much the diffuciler conquest, and more the usefuller. Another may lawfully exalt your bold attempts and fortunate enterprizes; but, for my part, I think that such a celebration would extremely misbecome a friendship, to which your goodness and my affection flatter me into a belief that our relation has rather given the occasion than degree. Besides that I have so great a concern in all things wherein you have any, that the presumption of my own modesty does, as well as the greatness of yours, silence my praises. And truly that which most endears your acquisitions to me is, that they have cost you so little blood. For besides that the glory is much more your own to reduce places by your own single virtue, and the interest it has acquired you, than if you had I know not how many thousand men to help you, and share as much the honour of your successes as they contribute to them; besides this consideration, I say, certainly though a laurel crown were more glorious amongst the Romans, the myrtle coronet (that crowned bloodless victories) ought to be acceptabler to a Christian, who is tied by the bindingest principles of his religion to a peculiar charity towards those that profess it; to use towards delinquents as much gentleness as infringes not the just rights of the innocent: and to be very tender of spilling their blood, for whom Christ shed his. But I am less delighted to learn your

successes in the world, than to find (by your letter to my sister Ranelagh) that you mean not that they shall tie you to it: and are resolved, as soon as your affairs and reputation will permit you, to divest your public employment, and retire to a quiet privacy, where you may enjoy yourself, and have leisure to consider the vanity of that posthume glory, which has nothing in it of certain but the uselessness. That, in the hurry of businesses that distract you, you could find leisure to bless me with your letters, is a favour, which, though it amaze me not, does highly satisfy me. The kindness they express is welcomer to me for what it argues, than for what it promises; and I am much more pleased to see you in a condition of making promises, than I should be with their accomplishment. I shall only, in general, desire your countenance for those that manage my fortune in your province, whither I should wait upon my dearest lady M. if black Betty did not; and seriously, the jade arrived very seasonably to save me a journey; for which I was but slenderly provided; for having not yet been able to put off my L. Goring's statute, I am kept in this town, to do penance for my transgression of that precept, "My son, put money in thy purse." But the term assigned my expiation is, I hope, near expired; and I despair not to see myself shortly in a condition to make you a visit, that shall prevent the spring's. I shall implore, for my lady Pegg, the self same passage I shall wish for myself, and solemnize the first easterly gale with a

Farewell, fair saint, may not the seas and wind, &c.

But I am so entirely taken up with the contemplation of her and you, that I had forgot that I have to write this night more letters than the four-and-twenty of the alphabet. My next shall give you an account of my transactions, my studies, and my amours; of the latter of which, black Betty will tell you as many lies as circumstances; but hope you know too well what she is, and whence she comes, not to take all her stories for sections, almost as great as is the truth that styles me my dearest brother, your most affectionate brother, and humble servant,

R. B.

London, this 20th of Dec. 1649.

LETTER XLIX.

From Mr. Boyle to Dame Augustine Cary.

Madam,

I know not whether the shame of having been so long in your debt, be greater than that of paying it so ill at last; but I am sure it is much harder to be excused, and therefore shall not attempt it, but leave it to Father Placid's oratory; though having failed in the substantial part of your business, I have little reason to hope he will succeed better in the ceremonial part of mine. The truth is, there is so great a difference in common sound between, It is done, and, It will be done, that I was unwilling to acknowledge the honour of having received your ladyship's commands, before I had compassed that of obeying them, which the marquis here hath so often assured me would suddenly fall to my share, that I thought we had both equal reason, his excellency to do it, and I to believe it. This right I must yet do him, that I never pressed him in this concern of your ladyship's, but he told me all my arguments were needless, for the thing should be done; and how to force a man that yields, I never understood: but yet I much doubt that till the result be given upon the gross of this affair, which is and has been some time under view, your part in particular will hardly be thought ripe for either his justice or favour, which will be rather the style it must run in, if it be a desire of exemption from a general rule given in the case: whatever person (after the father's return) shall be appointed to observe the course of this affair, and pursue the lady's pretensions here, will be sure of all the assistance I can at any time give him; though I think it would prove a more public service to find some way of dissolving your society, and by that means dispersing so much worth about the world, than, by preserving you together, confine it to a corner, and suffer it to shine so much less, and go out so much sooner, than otherwise it would. The ill effects of your retreat appear too much in the ill success of your business; for I cannot think any thing could fail that your ladyship would solicit: but, I presume, nothing in this lower scene is worthy either that, or so much as your desire or care,

which are words that enter not your gates, to disturb that perfect quiet and indifferency, which I will believe inhabit there; and by your happiness decide the long dispute, whether the greater lies in wanting nothing, or possessing much.

I cannot but tell you it was unkindly done to refresh the memory of your brother Da Cary's loss, which was not a more general one to mankind, than it was particular to me: but if I can succeed in your ladyship's service, as well as I had the honour once to do in his friendship, I shall think I have lived to good purpose here; and for hereafter, shall leave it to Almighty God, with a submission as abandoned as you can ex-

ercise in the low common concernments of this worthless life, which I can hardly imagine was intended us for so great a misery as it is here commonly made, or to betray so large a part of the world to so much greater hereafter as is commonly believed. However, I am obliged to your ladyship for your prayers, which I am sure are well intended me, and shall return you mine, that no ill thoughts of my faith may possess your ladyship with an ill one of my works too; which I am sure cannot fail of being very meritorious, if ever I reach the intentions I have of expressing myself upon all occasions, madam, your ladyship's most humble and most obedient servant.

Brussels, Feb. 16th, S. N. 1666.

BOOK THE SECOND.

MODERN AND MISCELLANEOUS, OF EARLY DATE, CONTINUED.

SECTION II.

LETTER I.

*From James Howel, Esq. to Sir J. S. at
Leeds Castle.*

Westmin. 25th July, 1625.

Sir,

It was a quaint difference the ancients did put betwixt a letter and an oration ; that the one should be attired like a woman, the other like a man : the latter of the two is allowed large side robes, as long periods, parentheses, similes, examples, and other parts of rhetorical flourishes : but a letter or epistle should be short-coated and closely couched : a hungerlin becomes a letter more handsomely than a gown ; indeed we should write as we speak ; and that's a true familiar letter which expresseth one's mind, as if he were discoursing with the party to whom he writes, in succinct and short terms. The tongue and the pen are both of them interpreters of the mind ; but I hold the pen to be the more faithful of the two ; the tongue *in udo posita*, being seated in a moist slippery place, may fail and falter in her sudden extemporal expressions ; but the pen, having a greater advantage of premeditation, is not so subject to error, and leaves things behind it upon firm and authentic record. Now letters, though they be capable of any subject, yet commonly they are either

narratory, objurgatory, consolatory, monitory, or congratulatory. The first consists of relations, the second of reprehensions, the third of comfort, the two last of counsel and joy : there are some who in lieu of letters write homilies ; they preach when they should epistolize : there are others that turn them to tedious tractates : this is to make letters degenerate from their true nature. Some modern authors there are who have exposed their letters to the world, but most of them, I mean among your Latin epistolizers, go freighted with mere Bartholomew ware, with trite and trivial phrases only, listed with pedantic shreds of school-boy verses. Others there are among our next transmarine neighbours eastward, who write in their own language, but their style is so soft and easy, that their letters may be said to be like bodies of loose flesh without sinews, they have neither joints of art nor arteries in them ; they have a kind of simpering and lank hectic expressions made up of a bombast of words, and finical affected compliments only : I cannot well away with such sleazy stuff, with such cobweb compositions, where there is no strength of matter, nothing for the reader to carry away with him that may enlarge the notions of his soul. One shall hardly find an apophthegm, example, simile, or any thing of philosophy,

history, or solid knowledge, or as much as one new created phrase in a hundred of them: and to draw any observations out of them, were as if one went about to distil-cream out of froth; insomuch that it may be said of them, what was said of the Echo, "That she is a mere sound and nothing else."

I return you your Balzac by this bearer: and when I found those letters, wherein he is so familiar with his king, so flat; and those to Richlieu so puffed with profane hyperboles, and larded up and down with such gross flatteries, with others besides, which he sends as urinals up and down the world to look into his water for discovery of the crazy condition of his body; I forbore him further. So I am your affectionate servitor.

LETTER II.

From the same to his Father, upon his first going beyond sea.

Broad-street, London, 1st March, 1618.

Sir,

I SHOULD be much wanting to myself, and to that obligation of duty the law of God and his handmaid Nature hath imposed on me, if I should not acquaint you with the course and quality of my affairs and fortunes, especially at this time, that I am upon point of crossing the seas to eat my bread abroad. Nor is it the common relation of a son that only induced me hereunto, but that most indulgent and costly care you have been pleased (in so extraordinary a manner) to have had of my breeding (though but one child of fifteen) by placing me in a choice methodical school (so far distant from your dwelling) under a learned (though lashing) master; and by transplanting me thence to Oxford, to be graduated; and so holding me still up by the chin until I could swim without bladders. This patrimony of liberal education you have been pleased to endow me withal, I now carry along with me abroad, as a sure inseparable treasure; nor do I feel it any burthen or incumbrance unto me at all; and what danger soever my person, or other things I have about me, do incur, yet I do not fear the losing of this, either by shipwreck, or pirates at sea, nor by robbers, or fire, or any other casualty on shore:

and at my return to England, I hope, at leastwise I shall do my endeavour, that you may find this patrimony improved somewhat to your comfort.

In this my peregrination, if I happen, by some accident, to be disappointed of that allowance I am to subsist by, I must make my address to you, for I have no other rendezvous to flee unto; but it shall not be, unless in case of great indigence.

The latter end of this week I am to go a ship-board, and first for the Low-Countries. I humbly pray your blessing may accompany me in these my travels by land and sea, with a continuance of your prayers, which will be so many good gales to blow me safe to port; for I have been taught, that the parent's benedictions contribute very much, and have a kind of prophetic virtue to make the child prosperous. In this opinion I shall ever rest your dutiful son.

LETTER III.

From the same to Dr. Francis Mansell, since Principal of Jesus College in Oxford.

London, 26th March, 1618.

Sir,

BEING to take leave of England and to launch into the world abroad, to breathe foreign air awhile, I thought it very handsome, and an act well becoming me, to take my leave also of you, and of my dearly honoured Mother, Oxford; otherwise both of you might have just grounds to exhibit a bill of complaint, or rather a protest against me, and cry me up; you for a forgetful friend; she for an ungrateful son, if not some spurious issue. To prevent this, I salute you both together: you with the best of my most candid affections; her with my most dutiful observance, and thankfulness for the milk she pleased to give me in that exuberance, had I taken it in that measure she offered it me while I slept in her lap: yet that little I have sucked, I carry with me now abroad, and hope that this course of life will help to connect it to a greater advantage, having opportunity, by the nature of my employment, to study men as well as books. The small time I supervised the glass-house, I got among those Venetians some smatterings of the Italian tongue,

which besides the little I have, you know, of school-language, is all the preparatives I have made for travel. I am to go this week down to Gravesend, and so embark for Holland. I have got a warrant from the Lords of the Council to travel for three years any where, Rome and St. Omers excepted. I pray let me retain some room, though never so little, in your thoughts, during the time of this our separation; and let our souls meet sometimes by intercourse of letters; I promise you that yours shall receive the best entertainment I can make them, for I love you dearly, dearly well, and value your friendship at a very high rate. So with appreciation of as much happiness to you at home, as I shall desire to accompany me abroad, I rest ever your friend to serve you.

LETTER IV.

From James Howel, Esq. to Dan. Caldwell, Esq. from Amsterdam.

Amsterdam, 10th April, 1619.

My dear Dan,
I HAVE made your friendship so necessary unto me for the contentment of my life, that happiness itself would be but a kind of infelicity without it; it is as needful to me as fire and water, as the very air I take in and breathe out: it is to me not only *necessitudo*, but *necessitas*: therefore I pray let me enjoy it in that fair proportion, that I desire to return unto you, by way of correspondence and retaliation. Our first league of love, you know, was contracted among the Muses in Oxford; for no sooner was I matriculated to her, but I was adopted to you; I became her son, and your friend, at one time: you know I followed you then to London, where our love received confirmation in the Temple, and elsewhere. We are now far asunder, for no less than a sea severs us, and that no narrow one, but the German Ocean; distance sometimes endears friendship, and absence sweeteneth it; it much enhances the value of it, and makes it more precious. Let this be verified in us; let that love which formerly used to be nourished by personal communication and the lips, be now fed by letters; let the pen supply the office of the tongue: letters have a strong operation, they have a kind of art-like embraces to mingle

souls, and make them meet, though millions of paces asunder; by them we may converse, and know how it fares with each other as it were by intercourse of spirits. Therefore among your civil speculations, I pray let your thoughts sometimes reflect on me (your absent self), and wrap those thoughts in paper, and so send them me over; I promise you they shall be very welcome, I shall embrace and hug them with my best affections.

Commend me to Tom Browyer, and enjoin him the like: I pray be no niggard in distributing my love plentifully among our friends at the inns of court; let Jack Toldervy have my kind commends, with this caveat, that the pot which goes often to the water, comes home cracked at last: therefore I hope he will be careful how he makes the Fleece in Cornhill his thoroughfare too often. So may my dear Daniel live happy and love his, &c.

LETTER V.

From the same to Mr. Richard Altham, at his chamber in Gray's Inn.

Hague, 30th May, 1619.

Dear sir,
THOUGH you be now a good way out of my reach, yet you are not out of my remembrance; you are still within the horizon of my love. Now the horizon of love is large and spacious, it is as boundless as that of the imagination; and where the imagination rangeth, the memory is still busy to usher in, and present the desired object it fixes upon; it is love that sets them both on work, and may be said to be the highest sphere whence they receive their motion. Thus you appear to me often in these foreign travels; and that you may believe me the better, I send you these lines as my ambassadors (and ambassadors must not lie) to inform you accordingly, and to salute you.

I desire to know how you like Plowden; I heard it often said, that there is no study requires patience and constancy more than the common law; for it is a good while before one comes to any known perfection in it, and consequently to any gainful practice. This (I think) made Jack Chaundler throw away his Littleton, like him that, when he could not catch the hare, said, A pox upon her, she is but dry tough meat, let her

go : it is not so with you, for I know you are of that disposition, that when you mind a thing, nothing can frighten you in finding constant pursuit after it till you have obtained it ; for if the mathematics, with their crabbedness and intricacy, could not deter you, but that you waded through the very midst of them, and arrived to so excellent a perfection ; I believe it is not in the power of Plowden to dastardize or cow your spirits, until you have overcome him, at leastwise have so much of him as will serve your turn. I know you were always a quick and pressing disputant in logic and philosophy ; which makes me think your genius is fit for law (as the Baron your excellent father was), for a good logician makes always a good lawyer : and hereby one may give a strong conjecture of the aptness or inaptitude of one's capacity to that study and profession ; and you know as well as I, that logicians, who went under the name of Sophisters, were the first lawyers that ever were.

I shall be upon uncertain removes hence, until I come to Rouen in France, and there I mean to cast anchor a good while ; I shall expect your letters there with impatience. I pray present my service to sir James Altham, and to my good lady your mother, with the rest to whom it is due in Bishopsgate-street, and elsewhere : so I am yours in the best degree of friendship.

LETTER VI.

*From the same to Capt. Francis Bacon,
from Paris.*

Paris, 30th March, 1620.

Sir,

I RECEIVED two of yours in Rouen, with the bills of exchange there inclosed ; and according to your directions I sent you those things which you wrote for.

I am now newly come to Paris, this huge magazine of men, the epitome of this large populous kingdom, and rendezvous of all foreigners. The structures here are indifferently fair, though the streets generally foul of all four seasons of the year ; which I impute first to the position of the city, being built upon an isle (the isle of France, made so by the branching and serpentine course

of the river of Seine), and having some of her suburbs seated high, the filth runs down the channel, and settles in many places within the body of the city, which lies upon a flat ; as also for a world of coaches, carts, and horses of all sorts, that go to and fro perpetually, so that sometimes one shall meet with a stop half a mile long of those coaches, carts, and horses, that can move neither forward nor backward, by reason of some sudden encounter of others coming a cross-way : so that often-times it will be an hour or two before they can disentangle. In such a stop the great Henry was so fatally slain by Ravillac. Hence comes it to pass, that this town (for Paris is a town, a city, and an university) is always dirty, and it is such a dirt, that by perpetual motion is beaten into such black, unctuous oil, that where it sticks no art can wash it off of some colours ; insomuch, that it may be no improper comparison to say, that an ill name is like the *crot* (the dirt) of Paris, which is indelible ; besides the stain this dirt leaves, it gives also so strong a scent, that may be smelt many miles off, if the wind be in one's face as he comes from the fresh air of the country : this may be one cause why the plague is always in some corner or other of this vast city, which may be called, as once Scythia was, *ragina populorum*, or (as mankind was called by a great philosopher) a great mole-hill of ants ; yet I believe this city is not so populous as she seems to be, for her form being round (as the whole kingdom is) the passengers wheel about, and meet oftener than they use to do in the long continued streets of London, which makes London appear less populous than she is indeed ; so that London for length (though not for latitude), including Westminster, exceeds Paris, and hath in Michaelmas term more souls moving within her in all places. It is under one hundred years that Paris is become so sumptuous and strong in buildings ; for her houses were mean, until a mine of white stone was discovered hard by, which runs in a continued vein of earth, and is digged out with ease, being soft, and is between a white clay and chalk at first : but being pulleyed up with the open air, it receives a crusty kind of hardness, and so becomes perfect free-stone ; and before it is sent up from the pit, they can reduce it to any form : of this stone the Louvre, the

king's palace, is built, which is a vast fabric, for the gallery wants not much of an Italian mile in length, and will easily lodge 3000 men; which, some told me, was the end for which the last king made it so big; that, lying at the fag-end of this great mutinous city, if she perchance should rise, the king might pour out of the Louvre so many thousand men unawares into the heart of her.

I am lodged here hard by the Bastile, because it is furthest off from those places where the English resort: for I would go on to get a little language as soon as I could. In my next, I shall impart unto you what state-news France affords; in the interim, and always, I am your humble servant.

LETTER VII.

From James Howel, Esq. to Richard Altham, Esq. from Paris.

Paris, 1st May, 1620.

Dear sir,

Love is the marrow of friendship, and letters are the elixir of love; they are the best fuel of affection, and cast a sweeter odour than any frankincense can do: such an odour, such an aromatic perfume, your late letter brought with it, proceeding from the fragrancy of those dainty flowers of eloquence, which I found blossoming as it were in every line; I mean those sweet expressions of love and wit, which in every period were intermingled with so much art, that they seemed to contend for mastery which was the strongest. I must confess, that you put me to hard shifts to correspond with you in such exquisite strains and raptures of love, which were so lively, that I must needs judge them to proceed from the motions, from the diastole and systole of a heart truly affected; certainly your heart did dictate every syllable you writ, and guided your hand all along. Sir, give me leave to tell you, that not a dram, nor a dose, nor a scruple of this precious love of yours is lost, but is safely treasured up in my breast, and answered in like proportion to the full: mine to you is as cordial, it is passionate and perfect as love can be.

I thank you for the desire you have to know how it fares with me abroad; I thank God I am perfectly well, and well contented with this wandering course of

life a while; I never enjoyed my health better, but I was like to endanger it two nights ago; for being in some jovial company abroad, and coming late to our lodging, we were suddenly surprised by a crew of *filous*, or night rogues, who drew upon us; and as we had exchanged some blows, it pleased God the Chevalier du Guet, an officer, who goes up and down the streets all night on horseback to prevent disorders, passed by, and so rescued us; but Jack White was hurt, and I had two thrusts in my cloak. There is never a night passes but some robbing or murder is committed in this town; so that it is not safe to go late anywhere, specially about the Pont-Neuf (the New Bridge), though Henry the Great himself lies centinel there in arms, upon a huge Florentine horse,* and sits bare to every one that passeth, an improper posture methinks to a king on horseback. Not long since, one of the secretaries of state (whereof there are always four), having been invited to the suburbs of St. Germain to supper, left order with one of his lacqueys to bring him his horse about nine; it so happened that a mischance befel the horse, which lamed him as he went a-watering to the Seine, insomuch that the secretary was put to beat the hoof himself, and foot it home; but as he was passing the Pont-Neuf, with his lacquey carrying a torch before him, he might overhear a noise of clashing of swords, and fighting, and looking under the torch, and perceiving they were but two, he bade his lacquey to go on; they had not made many paces, but two armed men, with their pistols cocked and swords drawn, made puffing towards them, whereof one had a paper in his hand, which he said he had casually took up in the streets, and the difference between them was about that paper; therefore they desired the secretary to read it, with a great deal of compliment; the secretary took out his spectacles and fell a-reading of the said paper, whereof the substance was, That it should be known to all men, that whosoever did pass over that bridge after nine o'clock at night in winter, and ten in summer, was to leave his cloak behind him, and in case of no cloak, his hat. The secretary starting at this, one of the comrades told him, that he thought that paper concerned him; so they unmantled him of a new plush

cloak, and my secretary was content to go home quietly, and *en curpo*. This makes me think often of the excellent nocturnal government of our city of London, where one may pass and repass securely all hours of the night, if he gives good words to the watch. There is a gentle calm of peace now throughout all France, and the king intends to make a progress to all the frontier towns of the kingdom, to see how they are fortified. The favourite Luines strengtheneth himself more and more in his minionship; but he is much murmured at, in regard the access of suitors to him is so difficult: which made a lord of this land say, That three of the hardest things in the world were, to quadrate a circle, to find out the philosopher's stone, and to speak with the duke of Luines.

I have sent you by Vacandary, the post, the French beaver and tweeses you writ for: beaver hats are grown dearer of late, because the Jesuits have got the monopoly of them from the king.

Farewell, dear child of virtue and minion of the Muses, and continue to love yours, &c.

LETTER VIII.

From the same to Sir James Crofts, from Paris.

Paris, 12th May, 1620.

I AM to set forward this week for Spain, and if I can find no commodity of embarkation at St. Maloes, I must be forced to journey it all the way by land, and clamber up the huge Pyrene hills; but I could not bid Paris adieu, till I had conveyed my true and constant respects to you by this letter. I was yesterday to wait upon Sir Herbert Crofts at St. Germain, where I met with a French gentleman, who, amongst other curiosities which he pleased to shew me up and down Paris, brought me to that place where the late king was slain, and to that where the marquis of Ancre was shot; and so made me a punctual relation of all the circumstances of those two acts, which in regard they were rare, and I believe two of the notablest accidents that ever happened in France, I thought it worth the labour to make you partaker of some part of his discourse.

France, as all Christendom besides (for there was then a truce betwixt Spain and the Hollanders), was in a profound peace, and had continued so twenty years together, when Henry IV. fell upon some great martial design, the bottom whereof is not known to this day; and being rich (for he had heaped up in the Bastile a mount of gold that was as high as a lance), he levied a huge army of 40,000 men, whence came the song, "The King of France with forty thousand men;" and upon a sudden he put his army in perfect equipage, and some say he invited our Prince Henry to come to him to be a sharer in his exploits. But going one afternoon to the Bastile, to see his treasure and ammunition, his coach stopped suddenly, by reason of some colliers and other carts that were in that narrow street; whereupon one Ravillac, a lay jesuit (who had a whole twelve-month watched an opportunity to do the act), put his foot boldly upon one of the wheels of the coach, and with a long knife stretched himself over their shoulders who were in the boot of the coach, and reached the king at the end, and stabbed him right in the left side to the heart, and pulling out the fatal steel he doubled his thrust, the king with a ruthless voice cried out, *Je suis blesse* (I am hurt), and suddenly the blood gushed out at his mouth. The regicide villain was apprehended, and command given that no violence should be offered him, that he might be reserved for the law, and some exquisite torture. The queen grew half distracted hereupon, who had been crowned queen of France the day before in great triumph; but in a few days after she had something to countervail, if not to overmatch, her sorrow; for according to St. Lewis's law, she was made queen-regent of France, during the king's minority, who was then but about ten years of age. Many consultations were held how to punish Ravillac, and there were some Italian physicians that undertook to prescribe a torment, that should last a constant torment for three days; but he escaped only with this, his body was pulled between four horses, that one might hear his bones crack, and after the dislocation they were set again; and so he was carried in a cart, standing half naked, with a torch in that hand which had committed the murder, and in the place where the act was done it was cut off,

and a gauntlet of hot oil was clapped upon the stump to staunch the blood; whereat he gave a doleful shriek: then was he brought upon a stage, where a new pair of boots was provided for him, half filled with boiling oil; then his body was pincered, and hot oil poured into the holes. In all the extremity of this torture he scarce shewed any sense of pain; but when the gauntlet was clapped upon his arm, to staunch the flux at that time of reeking blood, he gave a shriek only. He bore up against all these torments about three hours before he died. All the confession that could be drawn from him was, That he thought to have done God good service, to take away that king which would have embroiled all Christendom in an endless war.

A fatal thing it was that France should have three of her kings come to such violent deaths in so short a revolution of time. Henry II., running at tilt with M. Montgomery, was killed by a splinter of a lance that pierced his eye: Henry III. not long after was killed by a young friar, who, in lieu of a letter which he pretended to have for him, pulled out of his long sleeve a knife, and thrust him into the bottom of the belly, as he was coming from his close-stool, and so dispatched him; but that regicide was hacked to pieces in the place by the nobles. The same destiny attended the king by Ravillac, which is become now a common name of reprobach and infamy in France.

Never was a king so much lamented as this; there are a world not only of his pictures, but statues up and down France, and there is scarce a market town but hath him erected in the market place, or over some gate, not upon sign-posts, as our Henry VIII.; and by a public act of parliament, which was confirmed in the consistory at Rome, he was entitled Henry the Great, and so placed in the temple of Immortality. A notable prince he was, and of an admirable temper of body and mind; he had a graceful facetious way to gain both love and awe: he would be never transported beyond himself with choler, but he would pass by any thing with some repartee, some witty strain, wherein he was excellent. I will instance in a few which were told me from a good hand. One day he was charged by the duke of Bouillon to have changed his religion,

he answered, "No, cousin, I have changed no religion, but an opinion:" and the cardinal of Perron being by, he enjoined him to write a treatise for his vindication: the cardinal was long about the work, and when the king asked from time to time where his book was, he would still answer him, That he expected some manuscripts from Rome before he could finish it. It happened, that one day the king took the cardinal along with him to look on his workmen and new buildings at the Louvre; and passing by one corner which had been a long time begun, but left unfinished, the king asked the chief mason why that corner was not all this while perfected? "Sir, it is because I want some choice stones."—"No, no," said the king, looking upon the cardinal, "it is because thou wantest manuscripts from Rome." Another time the old duke of Main, who was used to play the droll with him, coming softly into his bed chamber, and thrusting in his bald head and long neck, in a posture to make the king-merry, it happened the king was coming from doing his ease, and spying him, he took the round cover of the close stool, and clapped it on his bald sconce, saying, "Ah, cousin, you thought once to have taken the crown off my head, and wear it on your own; but this of my tail shall now serve your turn." Another time, when at the siege of Amiens, he having sent for the count of Soissons (who had 100,000 franks a year pension from the crown) to assist him in those wars, and that the count excused himself by reason of his years and poverty, having exhausted himself in the former wars, and all that he could do now was to pray for his majesty, which he would do heartily: this answer being brought to the king, he replied, "Will my cousin, the count of Soissons, do nothing else but pray for me? tell him, that prayer without fasting is not available; therefore I will make my cousin fast also from his pension of 100,000 *per annum*."

He was once troubled with a fit of the gout; and the Spanish ambassador coming then to visit him, and saying he was sorry to see his majesty so lame, he answered, "As lame as I am, if there were occasion, your master the king of Spain should no sooner have his foot in

the stirrup but he should find me on horseback."

By these few you may guess at the genius of this sprightly prince : I could make many more instances, but then I should exceed the bounds of a letter. When I am in Spain, you shall hear further from me : and if you can think on any thing wherein I may serve you, believe it, sir, that any employment from you shall be welcome to your much obliged servant.

LETTER IX.

From Francis Howel, Esq. to Mr. Thomas Porter, after Captain Porter, from Barcelona.

Barcelona, 10th Nov. 1620.

My dear Tom,

I HAD no sooner set foot upon this soil, and breathed Spanish air, but my thoughts presently reflected upon you ; of all my friends in England, you were the first I met here ; you were the prime object of my speculation ; methought the very winds in gentle whispers did breathe out your name and blow it on me ; you seemed to reverberate upon me with the beams of the sun, which you know hath such a powerful influence, and indeed too great a stroke in this country. And all this you must ascribe to the operations of love, which hath such a strong virtual force, that when it fasteneth upon a pleasing subject, it sets the imagination in a strange fit of working, it employs all the faculties of the soul, so that not one cell in the brain is idle ; it busieth the whole inward man, it affects the heart, amusethe understanding ; it quickeneth the fancy, and leads the will as it were by a silken thread to co-operate them all ; I have felt these motions often in me, especially at this time that my memory is fixed upon you. But the reason that I fell first upon you in Spain was, that I remember I had heard you often discoursing how you have received part of your education here, which brought you to speak the language so exactly well. I think often of the relations I have heard you make of this country, and the good instruction you pleased to give me.

I am now in Barcelona, but the next

week I intend to go on through your town of Valencia to Alicant, and thence you shall be sure to hear from me farther, for I make account to winter there. The duke of Ossuna passed by here lately, and having got leave of grace to release some slaves, he went aboard the Cape galleys, and passing through the *churna* of slaves, he asked divers of them what their offences were ; every one excused himself ; one saying ; That he was put in out of malice, another by bribery of the judge, but all of them unjustly ; amongst the rest there was one little sturdy black man, and the duke asking him what he was in for, " Sir," said he, " I cannot deny but I am justly put in here, for I wanted money, and so took a purse hard by Tarragone, to keep me from starving." The duke, with a little staff he had in his hand, gave him two or three blows upon the shoulders, saying, " You rogue, what do you do amongst so many honest innocent men ? get you gone out of their company ;" so he was freed, and the rest remained still *in statu quo prius*, to tug at the oar.

I pray commend me to Signior Camillo, and Mazalao, with the rest of the Venetians with you ; and when you go aboard the ship behind the Exchange, think upon yours.

LETTER X.

From the same to Robert Brown, Esq. at the Middle Temple, from Venice.

Venice, 12th August, 1621.

Robin,

I HAVE now enough of the maiden city, and this week am to go further into Italy ; for though I have been a good while in Venice, yet I cannot say I have hitherto been upon the continent of Italy ; for this city is nought else but a knot of islands in the Adriatic sea, joined in one body by bridges, and a good way distant from the firm land. I have lighted upon very choice company, your cousin Brown and Master Webb ; and we all take the road of Lombardy, but we made an order among ourselves, that our discourse be always in the language of the country, under penalty of a forfeiture, which is to be indispensably paid. Randal Syms made us a curious feast lately, where in a cup of the richest Greek we had your health, and I could

not tell whether the wine or the remembrance of you was sweeter; for it was naturally a kind of aromatic wine, which left a fragrant perfuming kind of farewell behind it. I have sent you a runlet of it in the ship *Lion*, and if it come safe and unpricked, I pray bestow some bottles upon the lady (you know) with my humble service. When you write next to Mr. Symus, I pray acknowledge the good hospitality and extraordinary civilities I received from him. Before I conclude, I will acquaint you with a common saying that is used of this dainty city of Venice:—

*Venetia, Venetia, chi non te vede non te pregia,
Ma chi t'ha troppe veduto te dispreggia.*

Englished and rhymed thus (though I know you need no translation, you understand so much of the Italian):—

Venice, Venice, none thee unseen can prize;
Who hath seen too much will thee despise.

I will conclude with that famous hexastic which Sannazaro made of this great city, which pleaseth me much better:—

*Viderat Hadriacis Venetam Neptunus in undis
Stare urbem, et toti ponere jura mari;
Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantum vis, Jupiter, arces
Obijce et illa tui mœnia Martis ait,
Sic pelago Tibrim præfers urbem aspice utramque,
Illam homines dices, hanc possuisse Deus.*

When Neptune saw in Adrian surges stand
Venice, and give the sea laws of command:
Now Jove, said he, object thy Capitol,
And Mars' proud walls; this were for to extol
Tiber beyond the main; both towns behold;
Rome, men thou'lt say, Venice the gods did
mould.

Sannazaro had given him by St. Mark a hundred zecchins for every one of these verses, which amounts to about 300*l*. It would be long before the city of London would do the like; witness that cold reward, or rather those cold drops of water which were cast upon my countryman Sir Hugh Middleton, for bringing Ware river through her streets, the most serviceable and wholesome benefit that ever she received.

The parcel of Italian books that you write for, you shall receive from Mr. Leat, if it please God to send the ship to safe port; and I take it as a favour, that you employ me in any thing that may conduce to your contentment, because I am your serious servitor.

LETTER XI.

From James Howel, Esq. to Christopher Jones, Esq. at Gray's Inn, from Naples.

8th Oct. 1621.

Honoured father,
I MUST still style you so, since I was adopted your son by so good a mother as Oxford; my mind lately prompted me that I should commit a great solecism, if among the rest of my friends in England I should leave you unsaluted, whom I love so dearly well, especially having such a fair and pregnant opportunity as the hand of this worthy gentleman, your cousin Morgan, who is now posting hence for England. He will tell you how it fares with me; how any time these thirty odd months I have been tossed from shore to shore, and passed under various meridians, and am now in this voluptuous and luxuriant city of Naples: and though these frequent removes and tumbings under elimes of different temper were not without some danger, yet the delight which accompanied them was far greater; and it is impossible for any man to conceive the true pleasure of peregrination, but he who actually enjoys and puts it in practice. Believe it, sir, that one year well employed abroad by one of mature judgment (which you know I want very much) advantageth more in point of useful and solid knowledge than three in any of our universities. You know running waters are the purest, so they that traverse the world up and down, have the clearest understanding; being faithful eye-witnesses of those things which others receive but in trust, whereunto they must yield an intuitive consent, and a kind of implicit faith. When I passed through some parts of Lombardy, among other things I observed the physiognomies and complexions of the people, men and women; and I thought I was in Wales, for divers of them have a cast of countenance, and a nearer resemblance with our nation than any I ever saw yet: and the reason is obvious; for the Romans having been near upon three hundred years among us, where they had four legions (before the English nation or language had any being), by so long a coalition and tract of time, the two nations must needs copulate and mix; insomuch that I believe there is yet remaining in Wales many of the

Roman race, and divers in Italy of the British. Among other resemblances, one was in their prosody, and vein of versifying or rhyming, which is like our bards, who hold agnominations, and enforcing of consonant words or syllables one upon the other, to be the greatest elegance. As for example, in Welsh, *Tewgris, todyrris ty'r derry, gwillt, &c.* so have I seen divers old rhymes in Italian running so; *Donne, O danno, che felo affronta: in selva sulvo a me: Più caro cuore, &c.*

Being lately in Rome, among other pasquils I met with one that was against the Scots: though it had some gall in it, yet it had a great deal of wit, especially towards the conclusion; so that I think if King James saw it, he would but laugh at it.

As I remember some years since there was a very abusive satire in verse brought to our king; and as the passages were a-reading before him, he often said, that if there were no more men in England, the rogue should hang for it: at last being come to the conclusion, which was (after all his railing)

Now God preserve the king, the queen, the peers,
And grant the author long may wear his ears;
this pleased his majesty so well, that he broke into a laughter, and said, "By my soul, so thou shalt for me: thou art a bitter, but thou art a witty knave."

When you write to Monmouthshire, I pray send my respects to my tutor, master Moor Fortune, and my service to sir Charles Williams: and according to that relation which was betwixt us at Oxford, I rest your constant son to serve you.

LETTER XII.

From the same to Sir Eubule Thelwall, Knight, and Principal of Jesus College in Oxford.

London, idibus Mar. 1621.

Sir,

I SEND you most due and humble thanks, that notwithstanding I have played the truant, and been absent so long from Oxford, you have been pleased to make a choice of me to be fellow of your new foundation in Jesus' College, whereof I was once a member. As the quality of my fortunes, and course of

life run now, I cannot make present use of this your great favour, or promotion rather: yet I do highly value it, and humbly accept of it, and intend by your permission to reserve and lay it by, as a good warm garment against rough weather, if any fall on me. With this my expression of thankfulness, I do congratulate the great honour you have purchased, both by your own beneficence, and by your painful endeavour besides to perfect that national college, which hereafter is like to be a monument of your fame, as well as a seminary of learning, and will perpetuate your memory to all posterity.

God Almighty prosper and perfect your undertakings, and provide for you in Heaven those rewards which such public works of piety use to be crowned withal; it is the appreciation of your truly devoted servitor.

LETTER XIII.

From the same to Dan. Caldwell, Esq. from the Lord Savage's house in Long Melford.

20th of May, 1619.

My dear Dan,

THOUGH, considering my former condition of life, I may now be called a countryman, yet you cannot call me a rustic (as you would imply in your letter) as long as I live in so civil and noble a family, as long as I lodge in so virtuous and regular a house as any I believe in the land, both for æconomical government and the choice company; for I never saw yet such a dainty race of children in all my life together; I never saw yet such an orderly and punctual attendance of servants, nor a great house so neatly kept. Here one shall see no dog, nor a cat, nor cage, to cause any nastiness within the body of the house. The kitchen and gutters, and other offices of noise and drudgery, are at the fag end; there is a back gate for the beggars and the meaner sort of swains to come in at; the stables butt upon the park, which for a cheerful rising ground, for groves and browsings for the deer, for rivulets of water, may compare with any for its highness in the whole land; it is opposite to the front of the great house, whence from the gallery one may see much of the game when they are

a-hunting. Now for the gardening and costly choice flowers, for ponds, for stately large walks, green and gravelly, for orchards and choice fruits of all sorts, there are few the like in England. Here you have your bon christian pear and bergamot in perfection: your muscadell grapes in such plenty, that there are some bottles of wine sent every year to the king; and one Mr. Daniel, a worthy gentleman hard by, who hath been long abroad, makes good store in his vintage. Truly this house of Long Melford, though it be not so great, yet it is so well compacted, and contrived with such dainty conveniences every way, that if you saw the landscape of it, you would be mightily taken with it, and it would serve for a choice pattern to build and contrive a house by. If you come this summer to your manor of Sheriff in Essex, you will not be far off hence; if your occasions will permit, it will be worth your coming hither, though it be only to see him, who would think it a short journey to go from St. David's Head to Dover Cliffs to see and serve you, were there occasion. If you would know who the same is, it is yours, &c.

LETTER XIV.

*From James Howel, Esq. to his Brother,
Mr. Hugh Penry, upon his marriage.*

20th May, 1622.

Sir,

You have had a good while the interest of a friend in me, but you have me now in a straiter tie, for I am your brother by your late marriage, which hath turned friendship into an alliance; you have in your arms one of my dearest sisters, who I hope, nay I know, will make a good wife. I heartily congratulate this marriage, and pray that a blessing may descend upon it from that place where all marriages are made, which is from Heaven, the fountain of all felicity; to this prayer I think it no profaneness to add the saying of the lyric poet Horace, in whom I know you delight much; and I send it to you as a kind of epithalamium, and wish it may be verified in you both.

*Falices ter et amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
Divulsus querimoniis
Suprema citius solvet amor die.*

Thus Englished:

That couple's more than trebly blest,
Which nuptial bonds do so combine,
That no distaste can them untwine,
Till the last day send both to rest.

So, my dear brother, I much rejoice for this alliance, and wish you may increase and multiply to your heart's content. Your affectionate brother.

LETTER XV.

*From the same to Dr. Thomas Prichard,
at Worcester House.*

Paris, 3d Aug. 1621.

Sir,

FRIENDSHIP is the great chain of human society, and intercourse of letters is one of the chiefest links of that chain. You know this as well as I; therefore, I pray, let our friendship, let our love, that nationality of British love, that virtuous tie of academic love, be still strengthened (as heretofore) and receive daily more and more vigour. I am now in Paris, and there is weekly opportunity to receive and send; and if you please to send, you shall be sure to receive, for I make it a kind of religion to be punctual in this kind of payment. I am heartily glad to hear that you are become a domestic member to that most noble family of the Worcesters, and I hold it to be a very good foundation for future preferment; I wish you may be as happy in them as I know they will be happy in you. France is now barren of news, only there was a shrewd brush lately between the young king and his mother, who, having the duke of Epernon and others for her champions, met him in open field about *Pont de Cé*, but she went away with the worst; such was the rare dutifulness of the king, that he forgave her upon his knees, and pardoned all her accomplices; and now there is an universal peace in this country, which it is thought will not last long, for there is a war intended against them of the reformed religion: for this king, though he be slow in speech, yet he is active in spirit, and loves motion. I am here comrade to a gallant young gentleman, my old acquaintance, who is full of excellent parts, which he hath acquired by a choice breeding the baron his father gave him, both in the university and in the inns of court; so that for the time I envy no man's happiness. So with my hearty

commends, and much endeared love unto you, I rest yours.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the Honourable Mr. John Savage (now Earl of Rivers), at Florence.

London, 24th March, 1622.

Sir,

My love is not so short but it can reach as far as Florence to find you out, and farther too, if occasion required; nor are these affections, I have to serve you so dull, but they can clamber over the Alps and Appenines to wait upon you, as they have adventured to do now in this paper. I am sorry I was not in London to kiss your hands before you set to sea, and much more sorry that I had not the happiness to meet you in Holland or Brabant, for we went the very same road, and lay in Dort and Antwerp, in the same lodgings you had lain in a fortnight before. I presume you have by this time tasted the sweetness of travel, and that you have weaned your affections from England for a good while: you must now think upon home, as (one said) good men think upon Heaven, aiming still to go thither, but not till they finish their course; and yours I understand will be three years: in the mean time you must not suffer any melting tenderness of thoughts or longing desires to distract or interrupt you in that fair road you are in to virtue, and to beautify within that comely edifice which nature hath built without you. I know your reputation is precious to you, as it should be to every noble mind; you have exposed it now to the hazard, therefore you must be careful it receive no taint at your return, by not answering that expectation, which your prince and noble parents have of you. You are now under the chiefest clime of wisdom, fair Italy, the darling of nature, the nurse of policy, the theatre of virtue; but though Italy give milk to virtue with one dug, she often suffers vice to suck at the other; therefore you must take heed you mistake not the dug, for there is an ill-favoured saying, that *Inglese Italiano è diavolo incarnato*; An Englishman Italianate is a devil incarnate. I fear no such thing of you, I have had such pregnant proofs of your ingenuity, and noble inclinations to virtue and honour: I know you have a mind to both, but I

must tell you that you will hardly get the good will of the latter, unless the first speak a good word for you. When you go to Rome you may haply see the ruins of two temples, one dedicated to Virtue, the other to Honour; and there was no way to enter into the last but through the first. Noble sir, I wish your good very seriously, and if you please to call to memory, and examine the circumstance of things, and my carriage towards you since I had the happiness to be known first to your honourable family, I know you will conclude that I love and honour you in no vulgar way.

My lord, your grandfather, was complaining lately that he had not heard from you a good while: by the next shipping to Leghorn, among other things, he intends to send you a whole brawn in collars. I pray be pleased to remember my affectionate service to Mr. Thomas Savage, and my kind respects to Mr. Bold. For English news, I know this packet comes freighted to you, therefore I forbear at this time to send any. Farewell, noble heir of honour, and command always your true servitor.

LETTER XVII.

From the same to Dr. Prichard.

London, 6th Jan. 1625.

Sir,

SINCE I was beholden to you for your many favours in Oxford I have not heard from you (*ne gry quiden*); I pray let the wonted correspondence be now revived, and receive new vigour between us.

My lord chancellor Bacon is lately dead of a long languishing weakness; he died so poor that he scarce left money to bury him, which, though he had a great wit, did argue no great wisdom: it being one of the essential properties of a wise man to provide for the main chance. I have read, that it had been the fortunes of all poets commonly to die beggars; but for an orator, a lawyer, and philosopher, as he was, to die so, it is rare. It seems the same fate befel him, that attended Demosthenes, Seneca, and Cicero (all great men), of whom the two first fell by corruption. The fairest diamond may have a flaw in it, but I believe he died poor out of a contempt of the pelf of fortune, as also out of an excess of

generosity, which appeared, as in divers other passages, so once when the king had sent him a stag, he sent up for the under-keeper, and having drank the king's health to him in a great silver gift bowl, he gave it for his fee.

He wrote a pitiful letter to King James not long before his death, and concludes, "Help me, dear sovereign, lord and master, and pity me so far, that I who have been born to a bag, be not now in my age forced in effect to bear a wallet; nor that I, who desire to live to study, may be driven to study to live." Which words, in my opinion, argued a little abjection of spirit, as his former letter to the prince did of profaneness; wherein he hoped, that as the father was his creator, the son will be his redeemer. I write not this to derogate from the noble worth of the lord viscount Verulam, who was a rare man; a man *recondita scientia, et ad salutem literarum natus*, and I think the eloquentest that was born in this isle. They say he shall be the last Lord Chancellor, as sir Edward Coke was the last Lord Chief Justice of England; for ever since they have been termed Lord Chief Justices of the King's Bench; so hereafter they shall be only Keepers of the Great Seal, which for title and office are deposeable; but they say the Lord Chancellor's title is indelible.

I was lately at Gray's Inn with sir Eubule, and he desired me to remember him to you, as I do also salute *Meum Prichardum ex imis præcordiis, Vale κεφαλή μοι προσφιλεστάτη*. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XVIII.

From James Howel, Esq. to his well-beloved Cousin Mr. T. V.

London, 5th Feb. 1625.

Cousin,

You have a great work in hand, for you write to me that you are upon a treaty of marriage; a great work indeed, and a work of such consequence that it may make you, or mar you; it may make the whole remainder of your life uncouth or comfortable to you: for of all civil actions that are incident to man, there is not any that tends more to his infelicity or happiness; therefore it concerns you not to be over-hasty herein, nor to take the ball before the bound. You must be

cautious how you thrust your neck into such a yoke, whence you will never have power to withdraw it again; for the tongue useth to tie so hard a knot that the teeth can never untie, no not Alexander's sword can cut asunder, amongst us Christians. If you are resolved to marry, choose where you love, and resolve to love your choice: let love rather than lucre be your guide in this election; though a concurrence of both be good, yet, for my part, I had rather the latter should be wanting than the first: the one is the pilot, the other but the ballast of the ship, which should carry us to the harbour of a happy life. If you are bent to wed, I wish you another guess wife than Socrates had: who when she had scolded him out of doors, as he was going through the portal, threw a chamber pot of stale urine upon his head; whereat the philosopher, having been silent all the while, smilingly said, "I thought after so much thunder we should have rain." And as I wish you may not light upon such a Xantippe (as the wisest men have had ill luck in this kind, as I could instance in two of our most eminent lawyers, C. B.), so I pray that God may deliver you from a wife of such a generation that Strowd our cook here at Westminster said his wife was of, who, when (out of a mislike of the preacher) he had on Sunday in the afternoon gone out of the church to a tavern, and returning towards the evening pretty well heated with Canary, to look to his roast, and his wife falling to read him a loud lesson in so furious a manner, as if she would have basted him instead of the mutton, and, among other revilings, telling him often, "That the devil, the devil would fetch him;" at last he broke out of a long silence, and told her, "I prithee, good wife, hold thyself content: for I know the devil will do me no hurt, for I have married his kinswoman." If you light upon such a wife (a wife that hath more bone than flesh), I wish you may have the same measure of patience that Socrates and Strowd had, to suffer the grey mare sometimes to be the better horse. I remember a French proverb:—

*La maison est miserable et méchante.
Où la poule plus haut que le coq chante.*

That house doth every day more wretched grow,

Where the hen louder than the cock doth crow.

Yet we have another English proverb, almost counter to this, "That it is better to marry a shrew than a sheep;" for though silence be the dumb orator of beauty, and the best ornament of a woman, yet a phlegmatic dull wife is fulsome and fastidious.

Excuse me, cousin, that I jest with you in so serious a business: I know you need no counsel of mine herein: you are discreet enough of yourself; nor, I presume, do you want advice of parents, which by all means must go along with you. So wishing you all conjugal joy, and an happy confarreation, I rest your affectionate cousin.

LETTER XIX.

*From the same to the Lady Jane Savage,
Marchioness of Winchester.*

Lond. 15th Mar. 1626.

Excellent lady,
I MAY say of your grace as it was said once of a rare Italian princess, that you are the greatest tyrant in the world, because you make all those that see you your slaves, much more them that know you, I mean those that are acquainted with your inward disposition, and with the faculties of your soul, as well as the phisnomy of your face; for virtue took as much pains to adorn the one, as nature did to perfect the other. I have had the happiness to know both, when your grace took pleasure to learn Spanish: at which time, when my betters far had offered their service, in this kind, I had the honour to be commanded by you often. He that hath as much experience of you as I have had will confess, that the handmaid of God Almighty was never so prodigal of her gifts to any, or laboured more to frame an exact model of female perfection: nor was dame Nature only busied in this work; but all the Graces did consult and co-operate with her; and they wasted so much of their treasure to enrich this one piece, that it may be a good reason why so many lame and defective fragments of women-kind are daily thrust into the world.

I return you here the enclosed sonnet your grace pleased to send me lately, rendered into Spanish, and fitted for the same air it had in English, both for ca-

dence and number of feet. With it I send my most humble thanks, that your grace would descend to command me in any thing that might conduce to your contentment and service; for there is nothing I desire with a greater ambition (and herein I have all the world my rival) than to be accounted, madam, your grace's most humble and ready servitor.

LETTER XX.

From the same to Mr. R. Sc. at York.

Lond. 19th July,
the first of the Dogdays, 1626.

Sir,

I SENT you one of the 3d current, but it was not answered; I sent another the 13th, like a second arrow, to find out the first; but I know not what's become of either: I send this to find out the other two, and if this fail, there shall go no more out of my quiver. If you forget me, I have cause to complain, and more if you remember me: to forget may proceed from the frailty of memory; not to answer me when you mind me is pure neglect, and no less than a piacle. So I rest yours, easily to be recovered.

*Ira furor brevis, brevis est mea littera; cogor,
Ira correptus, corripuisse stylum.*

LETTER XXI.

*From the same to the Right Honourable
Lady Scroop, Countess of Sunderland;
from Stamford.*

Stamford, 5th Aug. 1628.

Madam,

I LAY yesternight at the post-house at Stilton, and this morning betimes the postmaster came to my bed's head, and told me the duke of Buckingham was slain. My faith was not then strong enough to believe it, till an hour ago I met in the way with my lord of Rutland (your brother) riding post towards London; it pleased him to alight, and shew me a letter, wherein there was an exact relation of all the circumstances of this sad tragedy.

Upon Saturday last, which was but next before yesterday, being Bartholomew eve, the duke did rise up in a well-disposed humour out of his bed, and cut

a caper or two, and being ready, and having been under the barber's hand (where the murderer had thought to have done the deed, for he was leaning upon the window all the while), he went to breakfast, attended by a great company of commanders, where monsieur Subize came to him, and whispered him in the ear that Roehel was relieved; the duke seemed to slight the news, which made some think that Subize went away discontented. After breakfast the duke going out, colonel Fryer stepped before him, and stopped him upon some business; and lieutenant Felton, being behind, made a thrust with a common tenpenny knife over Fryer's arm at the duke, which lighted so fatally that he slit his heart in two, leaving the knife sticking in the body. The duke took out the knife, and threw it away; and laying his hand on his sword, and drawing it half out, said, "The villain hath killed me" (meaning, as some think, colonel Fryer, for there had been some difference betwixt them); so reeling against a chimney, he fell down dead. The duchess being with child, hearing the noise below, came in her night-geers from her bedchamber, which was in an upper room, to a kind of rail, and thence beheld him weltering in his own blood. Felton had lost his hat in the crowd, wherein there was a paper sewed, wherein he declared, that the reason which moved him to this act was no grudge of his own, though he had been far behind for his pay, and had been put by his captain's place twice, but in regard he thought the duke an enemy to the state, because he was branded in parliament; therefore what he did was for the public good of his country. Yet he got clearly down, and so might have gone to his horse, which was tied to a hedge hard by; but he was so amazed that he missed his way, and so struck into the pastry, where, although the cry went that some Frenchman had done it, he, thinking the word was Felton, boldly confessed it was he that had done the deed, and so he was in their hands. Jack Stamford would have run at him, but he was kept off by Mr. Nicholas; so being carried up to a tower, captain Mincee tore off his spurs, and asking how he durst attempt such an act, making him believe the duke was not dead, he answered boldly, that he knew he was dispatched, for it

was not he, but the hand of Heaven that gave the stroke; and though his whole body had been covered over with armour of proof, he could not have avoided it. Captain Charles Price went post presently to the king four miles off, who being at prayers on his knees when it was told him, yet never stirred, nor was he disturbed a whit till all divine service was done. This was the relation, as far as my memory could bear, in my lord of Rutland's letter, who willed me to remember him to your ladyship, and tell you that he was going to comfort your niece (the duchess) as fast as he could. And so I have sent the truth of this sad story to your ladyship as fast as I could by this post, because I cannot make that speed myself, in regard of some business I have to dispatch for my lord in the way; so I humbly take my leave, and rest your ladyship's most dutiful servant.

LETTER XXII.

From James Howell, Esq. to his Cousin Mr. St. John, at Christ Church College in Oxford.

London, 25th Oct. 1627.

Cousin,

THOUGH you want no incitements to go on in that fair road of virtue where you are now running your course, yet being lately in your noble father's company, he did intimate to me, that any thing which came from me would take with you very much. I hear so well of your proceedings, that I should rather commend than encourage you. I know you were removed to Oxford in full maturity, you were a good orator, a good poet, and a good linguist for your time; I would not have that fate light upon you, which useth to befall some, who from golden students became silver bachelors, and leaden masters. I am far from entertaining such thought of you, that logic with her *quiddities*, and *qua, la, vel hipps*, can any way unpolish your humane studies. As logic is clubfisted and crabbed, so she is terrible at first sight; she is like a gorgon's head to a young student; but after a twelvemonth's constancy and patience, this gorgon's head will prove a mere bugbear; when you have devoured the organon, you will find philosophy far more delightful and pleasing to your palate. In feeding the soul with knowledge, the under-

standing requireth the same consecutive acts which nature useth in nourishing the body. To the nutrition of the body there are two essential conditions required, assumption and retention, then there follows two more, *πρῆσις* and *προσῆσις*, concoction and agglutination, or adhesion: so in feeding your soul with science, you must first assume and suck in the matter into your apprehension, then must the memory retain and keep it in; afterwards by disputation, discourse, and meditation, it must be well concocted; then it must be agglutinated, and converted to nutriment. All this may be reduced to these two heads, *tenere fideliter, et uti feliciter*, which are two of the happiest properties of a student. There is another act required to good concoction, called the act of expulsion, which puts off all that is unsound and noxious; so in study there must be an expulsive virtue to shun all that is erroneous; and there is no science but is full of such stuff, which by direction of tutor, and choice of good books, must be excerned. Do not confound yourself with multiplicity of authors, two is enough upon any science, provided they be plenary and orthodox; philosophy should be your substantial food, poetry your banquetting-stuff; philosophy hath more of reality in it than any knowledge; the philosopher can fathom the deep, measure mountains, reach the stars with a staff, and bless heaven with a girdle.

But among these studies, you must not forget the *unicum necessarium*: on Sundays and holidays let divinity be the sole object of your speculation, in comparison whereof all other knowledge is but cobweb learning: *præ quâ quisquiliæ cætera*.

When you can make truce with study, I should be glad you would employ some superfluous hour or other to write to me, for I much covet your good, because I am your affectionate cousin.

LETTER XXIII.

From the same to J. S. Knight.

London, 25th May, 1628.

Sir,
You writ to me lately for a footman, and I think this bearer will fit you: I know he can run well, for he hath run

away twice from me, but he knew the way back again. Yet though he hath a running head as well as running heels, (and who will expect a footman to be a stayed man?) I would not part with him were I not to go post to the North.—There be some things in him that answer for his waggeries; he will come when you call him, go when you bid him, and shut the door after him; he is faithful and stout, and a lover of his master; he is a great enemy to all dogs, if they bark at him in his running, for I have seen him confront a huge mastiff, and knock him down: when you go a country journey, or have him run with you a hunting, you must spirit him with liquor; you must allow him also something extraordinary for socks, else you must not have him to wait at your table; when his grease melts in running hard, it is subject to fall into his toes. I send him you but for trial; if he be not for your turn, turn him over to me again when I come back.

The best news I can send you at this time is, that we are like to have a peace both with France and Spain; so that Harwich men, your neighbours, shall not hereafter need to fear the name of Spinola, who struck such an apprehension into them lately, that I understand they began to fortify.

I pray present my most humble service to my good lady, and at my return from the North I will be bold to kiss her hands and yours. So I am your much obliged servitor.

LETTER XXIV.

From the same to R. S. Esq.

Westminster, 3d Aug. 1629.

Sir,

I AM one of them who value not a courtesy that hangs long betwixt the fingers. I love not those *viscosa beneficia*, those bird-limed kindnesses, which Pliny speaks of; nor would I receive money in a dirty clout, if possible I could be without it: therefore I return you the courtesy by the same hand that brought it; it might have pleased me at first, but the expectation of it hath prejudiced me, and now perhaps you may have more need of it than your humble servitor.

LETTER XXV.

From James Howel, Esq. to his Father.

London, Dec. 3d, 1630.

Sir,

SIR Tho. Wentworth hath been a good while lord president of York, and since is sworn privy counsellor, and made baron and viscount: the duke of Buckingham himself flew not so high in so short a revolution of time: he was made viscount with a great deal of high ceremony upon a Sunday in the afternoon at Whitehall. My lord of Powis (who affects him not so much) being told that the heralds had fetched his pedigree from the blood-royal, *viz.* from John of Gaunt, said, "D—e, if ever he come to be king of England, I will turn rebel." When I went first to give him joy, he pleased to give me the disposing of the next attorney's place that falls void in York, which is valued at 300*l.* I have no reason to leave my lord of Sunderland, for I hope he will be noble unto me. The perquisites of my place, taking the king's fee away, came far short of what he promised me at my first coming to him, in regard of his non-residence at York; therefore I hope he will consider it some other way. This languishing sickness still hangs on him, and I fear will make an end of him. There's none can tell what to make of it, but he voided lately a small worm at Wickham; but I fear there's an imposthume growing in him, for he told me a passage, how many years ago my lord Willoughby and he, with so many of their servants (*de gaieté de cœur*) played a match at foot-ball against such a number of countrymen, where my lord of Sunderland being busy about the ball, got a bruise in the breast, which put him in a swoon for the present, but did not trouble him till three months after, when being at Bever Castle (his brother-in-law's house) a qualm took him on a sudden, which made him retire to his bedchamber. My lord of Rutland following him, put a pipe full of tobacco in his mouth; he being not accustomed to tobacco, taking the smoke downwards, fell a casting and vomiting up divers little imposthumated bladders of congealed blood, which saved his life then, and brought him to have a better conceit of tobacco ever after; and I fear there

is some of that clotted blood still in his body.

Because Mr. Hawes of Cheapside is lately dead, I have removed my brother Griffith to the Hen and Chickens in Paternoster Row, to Mr. Taylor's, as genteel a shop as any in the city; but I gave a piece of plate of twenty nobles' price to his wife. I wish the Yorkshire horse may be fit for your turn; he was accounted the best saddle gelding about York, when I bought him of captain Philips, the muster master: and when he carried me first to London, there was twenty pounds offered for him by my lady Carlisle. No more now, but desiring a continuance of your blessing and prayers, I rest your dutiful son.

LETTER XXVI.

From the same to the Right Rev. Dr. Field, lord bishop of St. David's.

Westminster, 1st May, 1632.

My lord,

Your late letter affected me with two contrary passions, with gladness and sorrow. The beginning of it dilated my spirits with apprehensions of joy, that you are so well recovered of your late sickness, which I heartily congratulate: but the conclusion of your lordship's letter contracted my spirits, and plunged them in a deep sense of just sorrow, while you please to write me news of my dear father's death. *Permulsit initium, percussit finis.* Truly, my lord, it is the heaviest news that ever was sent me; but when I recollect myself, and consider the fairness and maturity of his age, and that it was rather a gentle dissolution than a death; when I contemplate that infinite advantage he hath got by this change and transmigration, it much lightens the weight of my grief; for if ever human soul entered heaven, surely his is there. Such was his constant piety to God, his rare indulgence to his children, his charity to his neighbours, and his candour in reconciling differences; such was the gentleness of his disposition, his unwearied course in actions of virtue, that I wish my soul no other felicity, when she hath shaken off these rags of flesh, than to ascend to his, and coenjoy the same bliss.

Excuse me, my lord, that I take my leave at this time so abruptly of you:

when this sorrow is a little digested, you shall hear further from me; for I am your lordship's most true and humble servitor.

LETTER XXVII.

From the same, to sir Ed. B. Knight.

London, 25th July, 1635.

Sir,

I RECEIVED yours this Maundy Thursday; and whereas among other passages, and high endearments of love, you desire to know what method I observe in the exercise of my devotions, I thank you for your request, which I have reason to believe doth proceed from an extraordinary respect to me; and I will deal with you herein as one should do with his confessor.

It is true, though there be rules and rubrics in our Liturgy sufficient to guide every one in the performance of all holy duties, yet I believe every one hath some mode and model or formulary of his own, especially for his private cucular devotions.

I will begin with the last day of the week, and with the latter end of that day, I mean Saturday evening, on which I have fasted ever since I was a youth in Venice, for being delivered from a very great danger. This year I use some extraordinary acts of devotion, to usher in the ensuing Sunday in hymns, and various prayers of my own penning, before I go to bed. On Sunday morning I rise earlier than upon other days, to prepare myself for the sanctifying of it; nor do I use barber, taylor, shoe-maker, or any other mechanic, that morning; and whatsoever diversions or lets may hinder me the week before, I never miss, but in case of sickness, to repair to God's holy house that day, where I come before prayers begin, to make myself fitter for the work by some previous meditations, and to take the whole service along with me; nor do I love to mingle speech with any in the interim, about news or worldly negotiations, in God's holy house. I prostrate myself in the humblest and decentest way of genuflection I can imagine; nor do I believe there can be any excess of exterior humility in that place; therefore I do not like those squatting unseemly bold postures upon one's tail, or muf-

fling the face in the hat, or thrusting it in some hole, or covering it with one's hand; but with bended knee, and in open confident face, I fix my eyes on the east part of the church, and heaven. I endeavour to apply every tittle of the service to my own conscience and occasions; and I believe the want of this, with the huddling up and careless reading of some ministers, with the commonness of it, is the greatest cause that many do undervalue and take a surfeit of our public service.

For the reading and singing psalms, whereas most of them are either petitions or eucharistical ejaculations, I listen to them more attentively and make them my own. When I stand at the Creed, I think upon the custom they have in Poland, and elsewhere, for gentlemen to draw their swords all the while, intimating thereby that they will defend it with their lives and blood. And for the Decalogue, whereas others use to rise, and sit, I ever kneel at it in the humblest and tremblingest posture of all; to crave remission for the breaches passed of any of God's holy commandments (especially the week before), and future grace to observe them.

I love a holy devout sermon, that first checks and then cheers the conscience; that begins with the Law, and ends with the Gospel; but I never prejudicate or censure any preacher, taking him as I find him.

And now that we are not only adulated, but ancient Christians, I believe the most acceptable sacrifice we can send up to heaven is prayer and praise; and that sermons are not so essential as either of them to the true practice of devotion. The rest of the holy sabbath I sequester my body and mind as much as I can from worldly affairs.

Upon Monday morn, as soon as the Cinque Ports are open, I have a particular prayer of thanks that I am reprieved to the beginning of that week; and every day following I knock thrice at heaven's gate, in the morning, in the evening, and at night; besides prayers at meals, and some other occasional ejaculations, as upon the putting on of a clean shirt, washing my hands, and at lighting of candles, which, because they are sudden, I do in the third person.

Tuesday morning I rise winter and

summer as soon as I wake, and send up a more particular sacrifice for some reasons; and as I am disposed, or have business, I go to bed again.

Upon Wednesday night I always fast, and perform also some extraordinary acts of devotion, as also upon Friday night; and Saturday morning, as soon as my senses are unlocked, I get up. And in the summer time I am oftentimes abroad in some private field to attend the sun-rising; and as I pray thrice every day, so I fast thrice every week; at least I eat but one meal upon Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, in regard I am jealous with myself, to have more infirmities to answer for than others.

Before I go to bed, I make a scrutiny what peccant humours have reigned in me that day; and so I reconcile myself to my Creator, and strike a tally in the exchequer of heaven for my *quietus est*, ere I close my eyes, and leave no burden upon my conscience.

Before I presume to take the holy sacrament, I use some extraordinary acts of humiliation to prepare myself some days before, and by doing some deeds of charity; and commonly I compose some new prayers.

I use not to rush rashly into prayer without a trembling precedent meditation; and if any odd thoughts intervene, and grow upon me, I check myself, and recommence; and this is incident to long prayers, which are more subject to man's weakness and the devil's malice.

By these steps I strive to climb up to heaven, and my soul prompts me I shall go thither; for there is no object in the world delights me more than to cast up my eyes that way, especially in a star-light night; and if my mind be overcast with any odd clouds of melancholy, when I look up and behold that glorious fabric, which I hope shall be my country hereafter, there are new spirits begot in me presently, which make me scorn the world and the pleasures thereof, considering the vanity of the one, and the inanity of the other.

Thus my soul still moves eastward, as all the heavenly bodies do; but I must tell you, that as those bodies are overmastered, and snatched away to the west, *raptu primi mobilis*, by the general motion of the tenth sphere, so by those epidemical infirmities which are incident to man, I am often snatched away a clean

contrary course, yet my soul persists still in her own proper motion. I am often at variance and angry with myself (nor do I hold this anger to be any breach of charity), when I consider, that whereas my Creator intended this body of mine, though a lump of clay, to be a temple of his holy Spirit, my affection should turn it often to a brothel-house, my passions to a bedlam, and my excess to an hospital.

Being of a lay profession, I humbly conform to the constitutions of the church, and my spiritual superiors; and I hold this obedience to be an acceptable sacrifice to God.

Difference in opinion may work a disaffection in me, but not a detestation; I rather pity than hate Turk or Infidel, for they are of the same metal, and bear the same stamp as I do, though the inscription differ. If I hate any, it is those schismatics that puzzle the sweet peace of our church; so that I could be content to see an Anabaptist go to hell on a Brownist's back.

Noble knight, now that I have thus eviscerated myself, and dealt so clearly with you, I desire by way of correspondence, that you will tell me what way you take in your journey to heaven; for if my breast lie so open to you, it is not fitting yours should be shut up to me; therefore I pray let me hear from you when it may stand with your convenience.

So I wish you your heart's desire here, and heaven hereafter, because I am yours in no vulgar friendship.

LETTER XXVIII.

From James Howel, Esq. to Master Thomas Adams.

Westminster, 25th August, 1633.

Sir,

I PRAY stir nimbly in the business you imparted to me last, and let it not languish; you know how much it concerns your credit, and the conveniency of a friend who deserves so well of you: I fear you will meet with divers obstacles in the way, which, if you cannot remove, you must overcome. A lukewarm irresolute man did never any thing well; every thought entangles him; therefore you must pursue the point of your design with heat, and set all wheels a-

going. It is a true badge of a generous nature, being once embarked in a business, to hoise up and spread every sail, main, mizen, sprit, and top-sail; by that means he will sooner arrive at his port. If the winds be so cross, and that there be such a fate in the thing, that it can take no effect, yet you shall have wherewith to satisfy an honest mind, that you left no thing unattempted to compass it; for in the conduct of human affairs, it is a rule, That a good conscience hath always within doors enough to reward itself, though the success fall not out according to the merit of the endeavour.

I was, according to your desire, to visit the late new married couple more than once; and to tell you true, I never saw such a disparity between two that were made one flesh in all my life; he handsome outwardly but of odd conditions; she excellently qualified, but hard-favoured; so that the one may be compared to a cloth of tissue doubled, cut upon coarse canvas; the other to a buckram petticoat, lined with satin. I think Clotho had her fingers smutted in snuffing the candle, when she began to spin the thread of her life, and Lachesis frowned in twisting it up; but Aglaia, with the rest of the Graces, were in a good humour when they formed her inner parts. A blind man is fittest to hear her sing; one would take delight to see her dance if masked; and it would please you to discourse with her in the dark, for there she is best company, if your imagination can forbear to run upon her face. When you marry, I wish you such an inside of a wife; but from such an outward phisnomy the Lord deliver you, and your faithful friend to serve you.

LETTER XXIX.

From the same to his Nephew J. P. at St. John's in Oxford.

Westminster, 1st August, 1633.

Nephew,

I HAD from you lately two letters; the last was well freighted with very good stuff, but the other, to deal plainly with you, was not so; there was as much difference between them, as betwixt a Scotch pedlar's pack in Poland, and the magazine of an English merchant in Naples, the one being usually full of taffaty,

silks, and satins; the other of calicoes, threads, ribbons, and such poldavy ware. I perceive you have good commodities to vend, if you take the pains: your trifles and bagatelles are ill bestowed upon me, therefore hereafter I pray let me have of your best sort of wares. I am glad to find that you have stored up so much already: you are in the best mart in the world to improve them, which I hope you daily do, and I doubt not, when the time of your apprenticeship there is expired, but you shall find a good market to expose them, for your own and the public benefit abroad. I have sent you the philosophy books you wrote to me for; any thing that you want of this kind for the advancement of your studies, do but write, and I shall furnish you. When I was a student as you are, my practice was to borrow rather than buy some sort of books, and to be always punctual in restoring them upon the day assigned, and in the interim to swallow of them as much as made for my turn. This obliged me to read them through with more haste to keep my word, whereas I had not been so careful to peruse them had they been my own books, which I knew were always ready at my dispose. I thank you heartily for your last letter, in regard I found it smelt of the lamp; I pray let your next do so, and the oil and labour shall not be lost which you expend upon your assured loving uncle.

LETTER XXX.

From the same to the Right Honourable the Lady Elizabeth Digby.

Westminster, 5th August.

Madam,

It is no improper comparison, that a thankful heart is like a box of precious ointment, which keeps the smell long after the thing is spent. Madam, without vanity be it spoken, such is my heart to you, and such are your favours to me; the strong aromatic odour they carried with them diffused itself through all the veins of my heart, especially through the left ventricle where the most illustrious blood lies; so that the perfume of them remains still fresh within me, and is like to do, while that triangle of flesh dilates and shuts itself within my breast; nor doth this perfume stay there, but as all

smells naturally tend upwards, it hath ascended to my brain, and sweetened all the cells thereof, especially the memory, which may be said to be a cabinet also to preserve courtesies; for though the heart be the box of love, the memory is the box of lastingness; the one may be termed the source whence the motions of gratitude flow, the other the cistern that keeps them.

But your ladyship will say, these are words only; I confess it, it is but a verbal acknowledgment; but, madam, if I were made happy with an opportunity, you shall quickly find these words turned to actions, either to go, to run, or ride upon your errand. In expectation of such a favourable occasion, I rest, madam, your ladyship's most humble and enchained servitor.

LETTER XXXI.

From James Howel, Esq. to Mr. Tho. H.

Fleet, 7th Nov. 1644.

Sir,

THOUGH the time abound with schisms more than ever (the more is our misery), yet I hope you will not suffer any to creep into our friendship; though I apprehend some fears thereof by your long silence and cessation of literal correspondence. You know there is a peculiar religion attends friendship; there is, according to the etymology of the word, a litigation and solemn tie, the rescinding whereof may be truly called a schism, or a piacle, which is more. There belong to this religion of friendship certain due rites and decent ceremonies, as visits, messages, and missives. Though I am content to believe that you are firm in the fundamentals, yet I find, under favour, that you have lately fallen short of performing those exterior offices, as if the ceremonial law were quite abrogated with you in all things. Friendship also allows of merits, and works of supererogation sometimes, to make her capable of eternity. You know that pair which were taken up into heaven, and placed among the brightest stars for their rare constancy and fidelity one to the other; you know also they are put among the fixed stars, not the erratics, to shew there must be no inconstancy in love. Navigators steer their course by them, and they are the best friends in working seas,

dark nights, and distresses of weather, whence may be inferred, that true friends should shine clearest in adversity, in cloudy and doubtful times. On my part, this ancient friendship is still pure, orthodox, and uncorrupted; and though I have not the opportunity (as you have) to perform all the rites thereof in regard of this recluse life, yet I shall never err in the essentials: I am still yours *κτήσει* (in possession), though I cannot be *χρησει* (in use); for *in statu quo nunc*, I am grown useless and good for nothing, yet in point of possession, I am as much as ever your firm unalterable servitor.

LETTER XXXII.

From the same to Dr. D. Featly.

Fleet, 2d Aug. 1644.

Sir,

I RECEIVED your answer to that futilous pamphlet, with your desire of my opinion touching it. Truly, sir, I must tell you, that never poor cur was tossed in a blanket, as you have tossed that poor coxcomb in the sheet you pleased to send me; for whereas a fillip might have felled him, you have knocked him down with a kind of Herculean club, *sans resource*. These times (more is the pity) labour with the same disease that France did during the league, as a famous author hath it, *Prurigo scripturientium erat scabies temporum*; "The itching of scribblers was the scab of the time:" it is just so now, that any triobolary pasquiller, every *tressis agaso*, any sterquilinous rascal, is licensed to throw dirt in the faces of sovereign princes in open printed language. But I hope the times will mend, and your man also, if he hath any grace, you have so well corrected him. So I rest yours to serve and reverence you.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the same to his honoured friend Sir S. C.

Holborn, 17th March, 1639.

Sir,

I WAS upon point of going abroad to steal a solitary walk, when yours of the 12th current came to hand. The high researches and choice abstracted notions

I found therein, seemed to heighten my spirits, and make my fancy fitter for my intended retirement and meditation: add hereunto that the countenance of the weather invited me; for it was a still evening, it was also a clear open sky, not a speck, or the least wrinkle appeared in the whole face of heaven, it was such a pure deep azure all the hemisphere over, that I wondered what was become of the three regions of the air with their meteors. So having got into a close field, I cast my face upward, and fell to consider what a rare prerogative the optic virtue of the eye hath, much more the intuitive virtue in the thought, that the one in a moment can reach heaven, and the other go beyond it; therefore sure that philosopher was but a kind of frantic fool, that would have plucked out both his eyes, because they were a hindrance to his speculations. Moreover, I began to contemplate, as I was in this posture, the vast magnitude of the universe, and what proportion this poor globe of earth might bear with it; for if those numberless bodies which stick in the vast roof of heaven, though they appear to us but as spangles, be some of them thousands of times bigger than the earth, take the sea with it to boot, for they both make but one sphere, surely the astronomers had reason to term this sphere an indivisible point, and a thing of no dimension at all, being compared to the whole world. I fell then to think, that at the second general destruction, it is no more for God Almighty to fire this earth, than for us to blow up a small squib, or rather one small grain of gunpowder. As I was musing thus, I spied a swarm of gnats waving up and down the air about me, which I knew to be part of the universe as well as I: and methought it was a strange opinion of our Aristotle to hold, that the least of those small insected ephemerals should be more noble than the sun, because it had a sensitive soul in it. I fell to think that in the same proportion which those animalillios bore with me in point of bigness, the same I held with those glorious spirits which are near the throne of the Almighty. What then should we think of the magnitude of the Creator himself? Doubtless, it is beyond the reach of any human imagination to conceive it: in my private devotions I presume to compare him to a great mountain of light, and my soul seems to

discern some glorious form therein; but suddenly as she would fix her eyes upon the object, her sight is presently dazzled and disgregated with the refugency and coruscations thereof.

Walking a little further I spied a young boisterous bull breaking over hedge and ditch to a herd of kine in the next pasture; which made me think, that if that fierce, strong animal, with others of that kind, knew their own strength, they would never suffer man to be their master. Then looking upon them quietly grazing up and down, I fell to consider that the flesh which is daily dished upon our tables is but concocted grass, which is recarnified in our stomachs, and transmuted to another flesh. I fell also to think what advantage those innocent animals had of man, who as soon as nature cast them into the world, find their meat dressed, the cloth laid, and the table covered; they find their drink brewed, and the buttery open, their beds made, and their clothes ready; and though man hath the faculty of reason to make him a compensation for the want of those advantages, yet this reason brings with it a thousand perturbations of mind and perplexities of spirit, griping cares and anguishes of thought, which those harmless silly creatures were exempted from. Going on I came to repose myself upon the trunk of a tree, and I fell to consider further what advantage that dull vegetable had of those feeding animals, as not to be so troublesome and beholden to nature, not to be subject to starving, to diseases, to the inclemency of the weather, and to be far longer-lived. Then I spied a great stone, and sitting a while upon it, I felt to weigh in my thoughts that that stone was in a happier condition in some respects, than either of those sensitive creatures or vegetables I saw before; in regard that that stone, which propagates by assimilation, as the philosophers say, needed neither grass nor hay, or any aliment for restoration of nature, nor water to refresh its roots, or the heat of the sun to attract the moisture upwards, to increase the growth, as the other did. As I directed my pace homeward, I spied a kite soaring high in the air, and gently gliding up and down the clear region so far above my head, that I fell to envy the bird extremely, and repine at his happiness, that he should

have a privilege to make a nearer approach to heaven than I.

Excuse me that I trouble you thus with these rambling meditations, they are to correspond with you in some part for those accurate fancies of yours lately sent me. So I rest your entire and true servitor.

LETTER XXXIV.

From Jas. Howel, Esq. to Mr. R Howard.

Fleet, 14th Feb. 1647.

Sir,

THERE is a saying that carrieth with it a great deal of caution; "From him whom I trust God defend me; for from him whom I trust not, I will defend myself." There be sundry sorts of trusts, but that of a secret is one of the greatest: I trusted T. P. with a weighty one, conjuring him that it should not take air and go abroad: which was not done according to the rules and religion of friendship, but it went out of him the very next day. Though the inconvenience may be mine, yet the reproach is his: nor would I exchange my damage for his disgrace. I would wish you take heed of him, for he is such as the comic poet speaks of, "*Plenus rimarum*," "he is full of chinks, he can hold nothing:" you know a secret is too much for one, too little for three, and enough for two; but Tom must be none of those two, unless there were a trick to solder up his mouth: if he had committed a secret to me, and enjoined me silence, and I had promised it, though I had been shut up in *Perillus*' brazen bull, I should not have bellowed it out. I find it now true, "That he who discovers his secrets to another, sells him his liberty, and becomes his slave:" well, I shall be wariier hereafter, and learn more wit. In the interim, the best satisfaction: I can give myself is, to expunge him quite *ex albo amicorum*, to raze him out of the catalogue of my friends (though I cannot of my acquaintance), where your name is inserted in great golden characters. I will endeavour to lose the memory of him, and that my thoughts may never run more upon the fashion of his face, which you know he hath

no cause to brag of; I hate such blateroons:

Odi illos ceu claustra Erebi——

I thought good to give you this little mot of advice, because the times are ticklish, of committing secrets to any, though not to your most affectionate friend to serve you.

LETTER XXXV.

From the same to Sir K. D. at Rome.

Fleet, 3d March 1646.

Sir,

THOUGH you know well that in the carriage and course of my rambling life, I had occasion to be, as the Dutchman saith, a landloper, and to see much of the world abroad, yet methinks I have travelled more since I have been immured and martyred betwixt these walls than ever I did before; for I have travelled the Isle of Man, I mean this little world, which I have carried about me and within me so many years: for as the wisest of pagan philosophers said that the greatest learning was the knowledge of one's self, to be his own geometer; if one do so, he need not gad abroad to see fashions, he shall find enough at home, he shall hourly meet with new fancies, new humours, new passions within doors.

This travelling over of one's self is one of the paths that leads a man to paradise: it is true, that it is a dirty and dangerous one, for it is thick set with extravagant desires, irregular affections and concupiscences, which are but odd comrades, and oftentimes do lie in ambush to cut our throats: there are also some melancholy companions in the way, which are our thoughts, but they turn many time to be good fellows, and the best company; which makes me, that among these disconsolate walls I am never less alone than when I am alone; I am oft-times sole, but seldom solitary. Some there are, who are over-pestered with these companions, and have too much mind for their bodies; but I am none of those.

There have been (since you shook hands with England) many strange things happened here, which posterity must have a strong faith to believe; but for my part I wonder not at any thing, I have

seen such monstrous things. You know there is nothing that can be casual; there is no success, good or bad, but is contingent to man sometimes or other; nor are there any contingencies, present or future, but they have their parallels from time past: for the great wheel of fortune, upon whose rim (as the twelve signs upon the zodiac) all worldly chances are embossed, turns round perpetually; and the spokes of that wheel, which point at all human actions, return exactly to the same place after such a time of revolution; which makes me little marvel at any of the strange traverses of these distracted times, in regard there hath been the like, or such like formerly. If the Liturgy is now suppressed, the Missal and the Roman Breviary was used so a hundred years since: if crosses, church windows, organs, and fonts, are now battered down, I little wonder at it; for chapels, monasteries, hermitaries, nunneries, and other religious houses, were used so in the time of old King Henry: if bishops and deans are now in danger to be demolished, I little wonder at it, for abbots, priors, and the pope himself, had that fortune here an age since. That our king is reduced to this pass, I do not wonder much at it; for the first time I travelled France, Lewis XIII. (afterwards a most triumphant king as ever that country had) in a dangerous civil war was brought to such straits; for he was brought to dispense with part of his coronation oath, to remove from his court of justice, from the council table, from his very bedchamber, his greatest favourites: he was driven to be content to pay the expense of the war, to reward those that took arms against him, and publish a declaration, that the ground of their quarrel was good; which was the same in effect with ours, *viz.* a discontinuance of the assembly of the three estates, and that Spanish counsels did predominate in France.

You know better than I, that all events, good or bad, come from the all-disposing high Deity of heaven: if good, he produceth them; if bad, he permits them. He is the pilot that sits at the stern, and steers the great vessel of the world; and we must not presume to direct him in his course, for he understands the use of the compass better than we. He commands also the winds

and the weather, and after a storm, he never fails to send us a calm, and to recompense ill times with better, if we can live to see them; which I pray you may do, whatsoever becomes of your still more faithful humble servitor.

LETTER XXXVI.

From the same to Mr. En. P. at Paris.

Fleet, 20th Feb. 1646.

Sir,

SINCE we are both agreed to truck intelligence, and that you are contented to barter French for English, I shall be careful to send you hence from time to time the currentest and most staple stuff I can find, with weight and good measure to boot. I know in that more subtle air of yours, tinsel sometimes passes for tissue, Venice beads for pearl, and demicasters for beavers: but I know you have so discerning a judgment that you will not suffer yourself to be so cheated; they must rise betimes that can put tricks upon you, and make you take semblances for realities, probabilities for certainties, or spurious for true things. To hold this literal correspondence, I desire but the parings of your time, that you may have something to do when you have nothing else to do, while I make a business of it to be punctual in my answers to you. Let our letters be as echoes, let them bound back and make mutual repercussions; I know you that breathe upon the continent have clearer echoes there, witness that in the Thuilleries, especially that at Charenton bridge, which quavers, and renders the voice ten times when it is open weather, and it were a virtuous curiosity to try it.

For news, the world is here turned upside down, and it hath been long a-going so: you know a good while since we have had leather caps and beaver shoes; but now the arms are come to be legs, for bishops' lawn sleeves are worn for boot-hose tops; the waist is come to the knee, for the points that were used to be about the middle are now dangling there. Boots and shoes are so long snouted, that one can hardly kneel in God's house, where all genuflection and postures of devotion and decency are

quite out of use: the devil may walk freely up and down the streets of London now, for there is not a cross to fright him any where; and it seems he was never so busy in any country upon earth, for there have been more witches arraigned and executed here lately, than ever were in this island since the creation.

I have no more to communicate to you at this time, and this is too much unless it were better. God Almighty send us patience, you in your banishment, me in my captivity, and give us heaven for our last country, where desires turn to fruition, doubts to certitude, and dark thoughts to clear contemplations. Truly, my dear Don Antonio, as the times are, I take little contentment to live among the elements: and (were it my Maker's pleasure) I could willingly, had I quit scores with the world, make my last account with nature, and return this small skinful of bones to my common mother. If I chance to do so before you, I love you so entirely well that my spirit shall visit you, to bring you some tidings from the other world; and if you precede me, I shall expect the like from you, which you may do without affrighting me, for I know your spirit will be a *bonus genius*. So desiring to know what is become of my manuscript, I kiss your hands, and rest most passionately your most faithful servitor.

LETTER XXXVII.

From James Howel, Esq. to Mr. William Blois.

Fleet, 20th March, 1647.

My worthy esteemed nephew,
I RECEIVED those rich nuptial favours you appointed me for bands and hats, which I wear with very much contentment and respect, most heartily wishing that this late double condition may multiply new blessings upon you, that it may usher in fair and golden days according to the colour and substance of your bridal ribband; that those days may be perfumed with delight and pleasure, as the rich scented gloves I wear for your sake. May such benedictions attend you both, as the epithalamiums of Stella in Statius, and Julia in Catullus, speak of. I hope also to be married shortly to a lady whom I have wooed above these five years, but I have found her coy and dainty hither-

to; yet I am now like to get her goodwill in part, I mean the lady Liberty.

When you see my N. Brownrigg, I pray tell him that I did not think Suffolk waters had such a Lethean quality in them, as to cause such an amnesia in him of his friends here upon the Thames, among whom for reality and seriousness, I may match among the foremost; but I impute it to some new task that his muse might haply impose upon him, which hath ingrossed all his speculations; I pray present my cordial kind respects unto him.

So praying that a thousand blessings may attend this confarreation, I rest, my dear nephew, yours most affectionately to love and serve you.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From the same to Henry Hopkins, Esq.

Fleet, 1st January, 1646.

Sir,

To usher in again old Janus, I send you a parcel of Indian perfume which the Spaniards call the Holy Herb, in regard of the various virtues it hath, but we call it tobacco; I will not say it grew under the king of Spain's window, but I am told it was gathered near his gold mines of Potosi (where they report that in some places there is more of that ore than earth), therefore it must needs be precious stuff: if moderately and seasonably taken (as I find you always do), it is good for many things; it helps digestion taken awhile after meat, it makes one void rheum, break wind, and keeps the body open: a leaf or two being steeped over-night in a little white-wine is a vomit that never fails in its operation: it is a good companion to one that converseth with dead men; for if one hath been poring long upon a book, or is toiled with the pen, and stupified with study, it quickeneth him, and dispels those clouds that usually overset the brain. The smoke of it is one of the wholesomest scents that is, against all contagious airs, for it over-masters all other smells, as king James, they say, found true, when being once a-hunting, a shower of rain drove him into a pig-stye for shelter, where he caused a pipe-full to be taken on purpose: it cannot endure a spider, or a flea, with such-like

vermin, and if your hawk be troubled with any such, being blown into his feathers, it frees him. Now to descend from the substance of the smoke, to the ashes, it is well known that the medicinal virtues thereof are very many; but they are so common, that I will spare the inserting of them here: but if one would try a petty conclusion, how much smoke there is in a pound of tobacco, the ashes will tell him; for let a pound be exactly weighed, and the ashes kept charily and weighed afterwards, what wants of a pound weight in the ashes cannot be denied to have been smoke, which evaporated into air. I have been told that sir Walter Raleigh won a wager of queen Elizabeth upon this nicety.

The Spaniards and Irish take it most in powder or smutchin, and it mightily refreshes the brain, and I believe there is as much taken this way in Ireland, as there is in pipes in England; one shall commonly see the serving-maid upon the washing-block, and the swain upon the plough-share, when they are tired with labour, take out their boxes of smutchin, and draw it into their nostrils with a quill, and it will beget new spirits in them with a fresh vigour to fall to their work again. In Barbary and other parts of Afric, it is wonderful what a small pill of tobacco will do; for those who use to ride post through the sandy deserts, where they meet not with any thing that's potable or edible, sometimes three days together, they use to carry small balls or pills of tobacco, which being put under the tongue, it affords them a perpetual moisture, and takes off the edge of the appetite for some days.

If you desire to read with pleasure all the virtues of this modern herb, you must read Dr. Thorus's *Pætiologia*, an accurate piece couched in a strenuous heroic verse, full of matter, and continuing its strength from first to last; insomuch that for the bigness it may be compared to any piece of antiquity, and, in my opinion, is beyond Βατραχομομαχία, or Γαλεωμομαχία.

So I conclude these rambling notions, presuming you will accept this small argument of my great respect to you. If you want paper to light your pipe, this letter may serve the turn; and if it be true, what the poets frequently sing, that affection is fire, you shall need no other

than the clear flames of the donor's love to make ignition, which is comprehended in this distich:

*Ignis Amoris fit, Tabaccum accendere nostrum,
Nulla petenda tibi fax nisi dantis amor.*

So I wish you, as to myself, a most happy new year; may the beginning be good, the middle better, and the end best of all. Your most faithful and truly affectionate servitor.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the same to Mr. T. Morgan.

May 12.

Sir,

I RECEIVED two of yours upon Tuesday last, one to your brother, the other to me; but the superscriptions were mistaken, which makes me think on that famous civilian doctor Dale, who being employed to Flanders by queen Elizabeth, sent in a packet to the secretary of state two letters, one to the queen, the other to his wife; but that which was meant for the queen was superscribed, "To his dear Wife;" and that for his wife, "To her most excellent Majesty:" so that the queen having opened his letter, she found it beginning with sweetheart, and afterwards with my dear, and dear love, with such expressions, acquainting her with the state of his body, and that he began to want money. You may easily guess what motions of mirth this mistake raised; but the doctor by this oversight (or cunningness rather) got a supply of money. This perchance may be your policy, to endorse me your brother, thereby to endear me the more to you: but you needed not to have done that, for the name *friend* goes sometimes further than brother; and there be more examples of friends that did sacrifice their lives one for another, than of brothers; which the writer doth think he should do for you, if the case required. But since I am fallen upon Dr. Dale, who was a witty kind of droll, I will tell you instead of news (for there is little good stirring now) two other facetious tales of his; and familiar tales may become familiar letters well enough. When queen Elizabeth did first propose to him that foreign employment to Flanders,

among other encouragements, she told him that he should have 20*s. per diem* for his expenses. "Then, madam," said he, "I will spend 19*s. a-day*."—"What will you do with the odd shilling?" the queen replied.—"I will reserve that for my Kate, and for Tom and Dick;" meaning his wife and children. This induced the queen to enlarge his allowance. But this that comes last is the best of all, and may be called the superlative of the three; which was when at the overture of the treaty the other ambassadors came to propose in what language they should treat, the Spanish ambassador answered, that the French was the most proper, because his mistress entitled herself Queen of France; "Nay then," said Dr. Dale, "let us treat in Hebrew, for your master calls himself King of Jerusalem."

I performed the civilities you conjoined me to your friends here, who return you the like centuplicated, and so doth your entire friend.

LETTER XL.

From James Howel, Esq. to the Right Honourable the Lady E. D.

April 8.

Madam,

THERE is a French saying, that courtesies and favours are like flowers, which are sweet only while they are fresh, but afterwards they quickly fade and wither. I cannot deny but your favours to me might be compared to some kind of flowers (and they would make a thick posie), but they should be to the flower called life everlasting; or that pretty vermilion flower which grows at the foot of the mountain *Ætna* in Sicily, which never loses any thing of its first colour and scent. Those favours you did me thirty years ago, in the life-time of your incomparable brother Mr. R. Altham (who left us in the flower of his age), methinks are as fresh to me as if they were done yesterday.

Nor were it any danger to compare courtesies done to me to other flowers, as I use them; for I distil them in the limbec of my memory, and so turn them to essences.

But, madam, I honour you not so much for favours, as for that precious brood of virtues, which shine in you with that brightness, but especially for those

high motions whereby your soul soars up so often towards heaven; insomuch, madam, that if it were safe to call any mortal a saint, you should have that title from me, and I would be one of your chiefest votaries: howsoever, I may without any superstition subscribe myself your truly devoted servant.

LETTER XLI.

From the same to the Lord Marquis of Hartford.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED your lordship's of the 11th current, with the commands it carried, whereof I shall give an account in my next. Foreign parts afford not much matter of intelligence, it being now the dead of winter, and the season unfit for action. But we need not go abroad for news, there is store enough at home. We see daily mighty things, and they are marvellous in our eyes; but the greatest marvel is, that nothing should now be marvelled at; for we are so habituated to wonders, that they are grown familiar unto us.

Poor England may be said to be like a ship tossed up and down the surges of a turbulent sea, having lost her old pilot; and God knows when she can get into safe harbour again: yet doubtless this tempest, according to the usual operations of nature, and the succession of mundane effects by contrary agents, will turn at last into a calm, though many who are yet in their nonage may not live to see it. Your lordship knows that the *κόσμος*, this fair frame of the universe, came out of a chaos, an indigested lump; and that this elementary world was made of millions of ingredients repugnant to themselves in nature; and the whole is still preserved by the reluctance and restless combatings of these principles. We see how the shipwright doth make use of knee-timber and other cross-grained pieces, as well as of straight and even, for framing a goodly vessel to ride on Neptune's back. The printer useth many contrary characters in his art to put forth a fair volume: as *d* is a *p* reversed, and *n* is a *u* turned upward, with other differing letters, which yet concur all to the perfection of the whole work. There go many various and dissonant tones to make an harmonious

concert. This put me in mind of an excellent passage which a noble speculative knight (sir P. Herbert) hath in his late Conceptions to his son; how a holy anchorite being in a wilderness, among other contemplations he fell to admire the method of Providence; how out of causes which seem bad to us he produceth oftentimes good effects; how he suffers virtuous, loyal, and religious men to be oppressed, and others to prosper. As he was transported with these ideas, a goodly young man appeared to him, and told him, "Father, I know your thoughts are distracted, and I am sent to quiet them; therefore if you will accompany me a few days, you shall return very well satisfied of those doubts that now encumber your mind." So going along with him, they were to pass over a deep river, whereon there was a narrow bridge: and meeting there with another passenger, the young man jostled him into the water, and so drowned him. The old anchorite being much astonished hereat, would have left him; but his guide said, "Father, be not amazed, because I shall give you good reasons for what I do, and you shall see stranger things than this before you and I part; but at last I shall settle your judgment, and put your mind in full repose." So going that night to lodge in an inn where there was a crew of banditti and debauched ruffians, the young man struck into their company, and revelled with them till the morning, while the anchorite spent most of the night in numbering his beads: but as soon as they were departed thence, they met with some officers who went to apprehend that crew of banditti they had left behind them. The next day they came to a gentleman's house, which was a fair palace, where they received all the courteous hospitality which could be: but in the morning as they parted there was a child in a cradle, which was the only son of the gentleman; and the young man, spying his opportunity, strangled the child, and so got away. The third day they came to another inn, where the man of the house treated them with all the civility that could be, and gratis; yet the young man embezzled a silver goblet, and carried it away in his pocket; which still increased the amazement of the anchorite. The fourth

day in the evening they came to lodge at another inn, where the host was very sullen and uncivil to them, exacting much more than the value of what they had spent; yet at parting the young man bestowed upon him the silver goblet he had stolen from that host who had used them so kindly. The fifth day they made towards a great rich town; but some miles before they came at it, they met with a merchant at the close of the day, who had a great charge of money about him; and asking the next passage to the town, the young man put him in a clean contrary way. The anchorite and his guide being come to the town, at the gate they spied a devil, who lay as it were sentinel, but he was asleep: they found also both men and women at sundry kinds of sports, some dancing, others singing, with divers sorts of revellings. They went afterwards to a convent of Capuchins, where about the gate they found legions of devils lying siege to that monastery; yet they got in and lodged there that night. Being awaked the next morning, the young man came to that cell where the anchorite was lodged, and told him, "I know your heart is full of horror, and your head full of confusion, astonishments, and doubts, for what you have seen since the first time of our association. But know, I am an angel sent from heaven to rectify your judgment, as also to correct a little your curiosity in the researches of the ways and acts of Providence too far; for though separately they seem strange to the shallow apprehension of man, yet conjunctly they all tend to produce good effects.

"That man which I tumbled into the river was an act of Providence; for he was going upon a most mischievous design, that would have damned not only his own soul, but destroyed the party against whom it was intended; therefore I prevented it.

"The cause why I conversed all night with that crew of rogues was also an act of Providence; for they intended to go a-robbing all that night; but I kept them there purposely till the next morning, that the hand of justice might seize upon them.

"Touching the kind host from whom I took the silver goblet, and the clownish or kuavish host to whom I gave it

let this demonstrate to you, that good men are liable to crosses and losses, whereof bad men oftentimes reap the benefit; but it commonly produceth patience in the one, and pride in the other.

“Concerning that noble gentleman, whose child I strangled after so courteous entertainment, know, that that also was an act of Providence; for the gentleman was so indulgent and doting on that child, that it lessened his love to Heaven; so I took away the cause.

“Touching the merchant whom I misguided in his way, it was likewise an act of Providence; for had he gone the direct way to this town, he had been robbed, and his throat cut; therefore I preserved him by that deviation.

“Now, concerning this great luxurious city, whereas we spied but one devil who lay asleep without the gate, there being so many about this poor convent, you must consider, that Lucifer being already assured of that riotous town by corrupting their manners every day more and more, he needs but one single sentinel to secure it; but for this holy place of retirement, this monastery inhabited by so many devout souls, who spend their whole lives in acts of mortification, as exercises of piety and penance, he hath brought so many legions to beleaguer them; yet he can do no good upon them, for they bear up against him most undauntedly, maugre all his infernal power and stratagems.” So the young man, or divine messenger, suddenly disappeared and vanished, yet leaving his fellow-traveller in good hands.

My lord, I crave your pardon for this extravagancy, and the tediousness thereof; but I hope the sublimity of the matter will make some compensation, which, if I am not deceived, will well suit with your genius; for I know your contemplations to be as high as your condition, and as much above the vulgar. This figurative story shews that the ways of Providence are inscrutable, his intention and method of operation not conformable oftentimes to human judgment, the plummet and line whereof is infinitely too short to fathom the depth of his designs; therefore let us acquiesce in an humble admiration, and with this confidence, that all things co-operate to the best at last, as they relate to his glory,

and the general good of his creatures, though sometimes they appear to us by uncouth circumstances and cross mediums.

So in a due distance and posture of humility I kiss your lordship's hand, as being, my most highly honoured lord, your thrice obedient and obliged servitor.

LETTER XLII.

From James Howel, Esq. to J. Sutton, Esq.
London, 5th January.

Sir,

WHEREAS you desire my opinion of the late History translated by Mr. Wad, of the Civil Wars of Spain, in the beginning of Charles the Emperor's reign, I cannot choose but tell you, that it is a faithful and pure maiden story, never blown upon before in any language but in Spanish, therefore very worthy your perusal; for among those various kind of studies that your contemplative soul delights in, I hold history to be the most fitting to your quality.

Now, among those sundry advantages which accrue to a reader of history, one is, that no modern accident can seem strange to him, much less astonish him. He will leave off wondering at any thing, in regard he may remember to have read of the same, or much like the same, that happened in former times: therefore he doth not stand staring like a child at every unusual spectacle, like that simple American, who, the first time he saw a Spaniard on horseback, thought the man and beast to be but one creature, and that the horse did chew the rings of his bit, and eat them.

Now, indeed, not to be an historian, that is, not to know what foreign nations and our forefathers did, *hoc est semper esse puer*, as Cicero hath it, “This is still to be a child” who gazeth at every thing: whence may be inferred, there is no knowledge that ripeneth the judgment, and puts one out of his nonage, sooner than history.

If I had not formerly read the Barons' wars in England, I had more admired that of the Leaguers in France. He who had read the near-upon fourscore years' wars in Low Germany, I believe, never wondered at the late thirty years' wars in High Germany. I had wondered more that Richard of Bourdeaux was

knocked down with halberds, had I not read formerly that Edward of Carnarvon was made away by a hot iron thrust up his fundament. It was strange that Murat the great Ottoman emperor should be lately strangled in his own court at Constantinople; yet, considering that Osman the predecessor had been knocked down by one of these ordinary slaves not many years before, it was not strange at all. The blazing star in Virgo thirty-four years since, did not seem strange to him who had read of that which appeared in Cassiopeia and other constellations some years before. Hence may be inferred, that history is the great looking-glass through which we may behold with ancestral eyes, not only the various actions of ages past, and the odd accidents that attended time, but also discern the different humours of men, and feel the pulse of former times.

This history will display the very intrinsics of the Castilian, who goes for the prime Spaniard; and makes the opinion a paradox, which cries him up to be so constant to his principles, so loyal to his prince, and so conformable to government; for it will discover as much levity and tumultuary passions in him as in other nations.

Among divers other examples which could be produced out of this story, I will instance in one: When Juan de Padillia, an infamous fellow, and of base extraction, was made general of the people, among others there was a priest, that being a great zealot for him, used to pray publicly in the church, "Let us pray for the whole Commonalty, and his majesty Don Juan de Padillia, and for the lady Donna Maria Pacheco his wife," &c. But a little after, some of Juan de Padillia's soldiers having quartered in his house, and pitifully plundered him, the next Sunday the same priest said in the church, "Beloved Christians, you know how Juan de Padillia passing this way, some of his brigade were billeted in my house: truly they have not left me one chicken; they have drunk up a whole barrel of wine, devoured my bacon, and taken away my Catilina, my maid Kate: I charge you therefore pray no more for him." Divers such traverses as these may be read in that story; which may be the reason why it was suppressed in Spain, that it should not cross the seas, or clamber over the Pyreneans to ac-

quaint other nations with their foolery and baseness: yet Mr. Simon Digby, a gentleman of much worth, got a copy, which he brought over with him, out of which this translation is derived; though I must tell you by the bye, that some passages were commanded to be omitted because they had too near an analogy with our times.

So in a serious way of true friendship, I profess myself your most affectionate servitor.

LETTER XLIII.

From James Howel, Esq. to the Lord Marquis of Dorchester.

London, 15th August.

My Lord,
THERE is a sentence that carrieth a high sense with it, viz. *Ingenia principum fata temporum*, "The fancy of the prince is the fate of the times:" so in point of peace or war, oppression or justice, virtue or vice, profaneness or devotion; for *regis ad exemplum*. But there is another saying, which is as true, viz. *Genius plebis est fatum principis*, "The happiness of the prince depends upon the humour of the people." There cannot be a more pregnant example hereof, than in that successful and long-lived queen, queen Elizabeth, who having come, as it were, from the scaffold to the throne, enjoyed a wonderful calm (excepting some short gusts of insurrection that happened in the beginning) for near upon forty-five years together. But this, my lord, may be imputed to the temper of the people, who had had a boisterous king not long before, with so many revolutions in religion, and a minor king afterward, which made them to be governed by their fellow-subjects. And the fire and faggot being frequent among them in queen Mary's days, the humours of the common people were pretty well spent, and so were willing to conform to any government that might preserve them and their estates in quietness. Yet in the reign of that so popular and well-beloved queen there were many traverses, which trench as much if not more upon the privileges of parliament, and the liberties of the people, than any that happened in the reign of the two last kings: yet it was not

their fate to be so popular. Touching the first, *viz.* parliament; in one of hers, there was a motion made in the House of Commons, that there should be a lecture in the morning some days of the week before they sat, whereunto the House was very inclinable: the queen hearing of it, sent them a message, that she much wondered at their rashness, that they should offer to introduce such an innovation.

Another parliament would have proposed ways for the regulation of her court; but she sent them another such message, that she wondered, that, being called by her thither to consult of public affairs, they should intermeddle with the government of her ordinary family, and to think her to be so ill an housewife as not to be able to look to her own house herself.

In another parliament there was a motion made, that the queen should entail the succession of the crown, and declare her next heir; but Wentworth, who proposed it, was committed to the Tower, where he breathed his last; and Bromley, upon a less occasion, was clapped in the Fleet.

Another time, the House petitioning that the Lords might join in private committees with the Commoners, she utterly rejected it. You know how Stubbs and Page had their hands cut off with a butcher's knife and a mallet, because they writ against the match with the duke of Anjou; and Penry was hanged at Tyburn, though Alured, who writ a bitter invective against the late Spanish match, was but confined for a short time; how sir John Heywood was shut up in the Tower, for an epistle dedicatory to the earl of Essex, &c.

Touching her favourites, what a monster of a man was Leicester, who first brought the art of poisoning into England? Add hereunto, that privy-seals were common in her days, and pressing of men more frequent, especially for Ireland, where they were sent in handfuls, rather to continue a war (by the cunning of the officers) than to conclude it. The three fleets she sent against the Spaniard did hardly make the benefit of the voyages to countervail the charge. How poorly did the English garrison quit Havre-de-grace? and how were we baffled for the arrears that were due to England (by article) for the forces sent into

France? For buildings, with all kind of braveries else that use to make a nation happy, as riches and commerce, inward and outward, it was not the twentieth part so much in the best of her days (as appears by the Custom-house books) as it was in the reign of her successors.

Touching the religion of the court, she seldom came to sermon but in Lent-time, nor did there use to be any sermon upon Sundays, unless they were festivals; whereas the succeeding kings had duly two every morning, one for the household, the other for themselves, where they were always present, as also at private prayers in the closet: yet it was not their fortune to gain so much upon the affections of city or country. Therefore, my lord, the felicity of queen Elizabeth may be much imputed to the rare temper and moderation of men's minds in those days; for the purse of the common people, and Londoners, did beat nothing so high as it did afterwards, when they grew pampered with so long peace and plenty. Add hereunto, that neither Hans, Jocky, or John Calvin, had taken such footing here as they did get afterwards, whose humour is to pry and peep with a kind of malice into the carriage of the court and mysteries of state, as also to malign nobility, with the wealth and solemnities of the church.

My lord, it is far from my meaning hereby to let drop the least aspersion upon the tomb of that rare renowned queen; but it is only to observe the differing temper both of time and people. The fame of some princes is like the rose, which, as we find by experience, smells sweeter after it is plucked: the memory of others is like the tulip and poppy, which make a gay show, and fair flourish, while they stand upon the stalk, but being cut down they give an ill-favoured scent. It was the happiness of that great long-lived queen to cast a pleasing odour among her people, both while she stood, and after she was cut off by the common stroke of mortality; and the older the world grows, the fresher her fame will be. Yet she is little beholden to any foreign writers, unless it be the Hollanders; and good reason they had to speak well of her, for she was the chiefest instrument, who, though with the expense of much Eng-

lish blood and bullion, raised them to a republic, by casting that fatal bone for the Spaniard to gnaw upon, which shook his teeth so ill-favourably for fourscore years together. Other writers speak bitterly of her for her carriage to her sister the queen of Scots; for her ingratitude to her brother Philip of Spain; for giving advice, by her ambassador with the Great Turk, to expel the Jesuits, who had got a college in Peru: as also that her secretary Walsingham should project the poisoning of the waters of Douay: and lastly, how she suffered the festival of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary in September to be turned to the celebration of her own birthday, &c. But these stains are cast upon her by her enemies; and the aspersions of an enemy use to be like the dirt of oysters, which doth rather cleanse than contaminate.

Thus, my lord, have I pointed at some remarks, to shew how various and discrepant the humours of a nation may be, and the genius of the times, from what it was; which doubtless must proceed from a high all-disposing power: a speculation that may become the greatest and knowingest spirits, among whom your lordship doth shine as a star of the first magnitude; for your house may be called a true academy, and your head the capital of knowledge, or rather an exchequer, wherein there is a treasure enough to give pensions to all the wits of the time. With these thoughts I rest, my most highly honoured lord, your very obedient and ever obliged servant."

LETTER XLIV.

From James Howel, Esq. to Sir E. S.

London, 4th August.

Sir,

IN the various courses of my wandering life, I have had occasion to spend some part of my time in literal correspondences with divers; but I never remember that I pleased myself more in paying these civilities to any than to yourself; for when I undertake this task, I find that my head, my hand, and my heart, go all so willing about it. The invention of the one, the graphical office of the other, and the affections of the last, are so ready to obey me in performing the work; work do I call it? It is rather

a sport, my pen and paper are as a chess-board, or as your instruments of music are to you, when you would recreate your harmonious soul. Whence this proceeds I know not, unless it be from a charming kind of virtue that your letters carry with them to work upon my spirits, which are so full of facete and familiar friendly strains, and so punctual in answering every part of mine, that you may give the law of epistolizing to all mankind.

Touching your poet laureat Skelton, I found him at last (as I told you before) skulking in Duck Lane, pitifully tattered and torn; and, as these times are, I do not think it worth the labour and cost to put him in better clothes, for the genius of the age is quite another thing: yet there be some lines of his, which I think will never be out of date for their quaint sense; and with these I will close this letter, and salute you, as he did his friend, with these options:

*Salve plus decies quam sunt momenta diurna,
Quot species generum, quot res, quot nomina rerum,
Quot pratis flores, quot sunt et in orbe colores,
Quot pisces, quot aves, quot sunt et in æquore naves,
Quot volucrum penna, quot sunt tormenta gehennæ,
Quot cæli stellæ, quot sunt miracula Thomæ;
Quot sunt virtutes, tantas tibi mitto salutes.*

These were the wishes in time of yore of Jo. Skelton, but now they are of your, &c.

LETTER XLV.

From the same to R. Davies, Esq.

London, 5th July.

Sir,

DID your letters know how truly welcome they are to me, they would make more haste, and not loiter so long in the way; for I did not receive yours of the 2d of June till the 1st of July; which is time enough to have travelled not only a hundred English, but so many Helvetian miles, that are five times bigger; for in some places they contain forty furlongs, whereas ours have but eight, unless it be in Wales, where they are allowed better measure, or in the north parts, where there is a wee bit to every mile. But that yours should be a whole month in making scarce 100 English miles (for the distance between us is no more) is strange to me, unless you purposely sent it by John Long, the carrier. I know, being so near Lemster's

ore, that you dwell in a gentle soil, which is good for cheese as well as for cloth: therefore if you send me a good one, I shall return my cousin your wife something from hence that may be equivalent: if you neglect me I shall think that Wales is relapsed into her first barbarisms; for Strabo makes it one of his arguments to prove the Britons barbarous, because they had not the art of making cheese till the Romans came: but I believe you will preserve them from this imputation again. I know you can want no good grass thereabouts, which, as they say here, grows so fast in some of your fields, that if one should put his horse there over night, he should not find him again the next morning. So with my very respectful commends to yourself, and to the partner of your couch and cares, I rest, my dear cousin, yours always to dispose of.

LETTER XLVI.

From James Howel, Esq. to Mr. W. Price, at Oxon.

London, 3d February.

My precious nephew,
THERE could hardly better news be brought to me, than to understand that you are so great a student, and that having passed through the briars of logic, you fall so close to philosophy: yet I do not like your method in one thing, that you are so fond of new authors, and neglect the old, as I hear you do. It is the ungrateful genius of this age, that if any sciolist can find a hole in an old author's coat, he will endeavour to make it much more wide, thinking to make himself somebody thereby; I am none of those; but touching the ancients, I hold this to be a good moral rule, *laudandum quod bene, oligoscendum quod aliter dixerunt*: the older the author is, commonly the more solid he is, and the greater teller of truth. This makes me think on a Spanish captain, who being invited to a fish dinner, and coming late, he sat at the lower end of the table, where the small fish lay, the great ones being at the upper end; thereupon he took one of the little fish, and held it to his ear; his comrades asked him what he meant by that; he answered in a sad tone, "Some thirty years since, my father, passing from Spain to Barbary, was cast away in a storm, and I

am asking this little fish whether he could tell any tidings of his body; he answers me, that he is too young to tell me any thing, but those old fish at your end of the table may say something to it:" so by that trick of drollery he got his share of them. The application is easy, therefore I advise you not to neglect old authors; for though we be come as it were to the meridian of truth, yet there be many neoterical commentators and self-conceited writers, that eclipse her in many things, and go from *obscurum to obscuris*.

Give me leave to tell you cousin, that your kindred and friends, with all the world besides, expect much from you in regard to the pregnancy of your spirit, and those advantages you have of others, being now at the source of all knowledge. I was told of a countryman, who coming to Oxford, and being at the town's end, stood listening to a flock of geese, and a few dogs that were hard by: being asked the reason, he answered, "That he thought the geese about Oxford did gaggle Greek, and the dogs barked in Latin." If some in the world think so much of those irrational poor creatures, that take in University air, what will your friends in the country expect from you, who have the instruments of reason in such a perfection, and so well strung with a tenacious memory, a quick understanding, and rich invention? all which I have discovered in you, and doubt not but you will employ them to the comfort of your friends, your own credit, and the particular contentment of your truly affectionate uncle.

LETTER XLVII.

From the same to Mr. R. Lee in Antwerp.

London, 9th November.

Sir,

AN acre of performance is worth the whole land of promise: besides, as the Italian hath it, "Deeds are men, and words women." You pleased to promise me, when you shook hands with England, to barter letters with me; but whereas I writ to you a good while since by Mr. Simons, I have not received a syllable from you ever since.

The times here frown more and more upon the cavaliers, yet their minds are buoyed up still with strong hopes: some

of them being lately in company of such whom the times favour, and reporting some comfortable news on the royalists' side, one of the other answered, "Thus you cavaliers still fool yourselves, and build always castles in the air:" thereupon a sudden reply was made, "Where will you have us to build them else, for you have taken all our lands from us?" I know what you will say when you read this: "A pox on those true jests."

This tale puts me in mind of another: There was a gentleman lately, who was offered by the parliament a parcel of church or crown lands, equal to his arrears; and asking counsel of a friend of his which he should take, answered, "Crown lands by all means; for if you take them you run a hazard only to be hanged; but if you take church land you are sure to be damned." Whereupon the other made him a shrewd reply: "Sir, I will tell you a tale: There was an old usurer not far from London, who had trained up a dog of his to bring his meat after him in a hand-basket, so that in time the shag dog was so well bred, that his master used to send him by himself to Smithfield shambles with a basket in his mouth, and a note in the bottom thereof to his butcher, who accordingly would put in what joint of meat he writ for, and the dog would carry it handsomely home. It happened one day, that as the dog was carrying a good shoulder of mutton home to his master, he was set upon by a company of other huge dogs, who snatched away the basket, and fell to the mutton: the other dog measuring his own single strength, and finding he was too weak to redeem his master's mutton, said within himself (as we read the like of Chrysippus's dog), 'Nay, since there is no remedy, you shall be hanged before you have all; I will have also my share:' and so fell a-eating amongst them. I need not," said he, "make the application to you, it is too obvious; therefore, I intend to have my share also of the church lands."

In that large list of friends you have left behind you here, I am one who is very sensible that you have thus banished yourself; it is the high will of Heaven that matters should be thus. Therefore, *Quod divinitus accidit humiliter, quod ab hominibus viriliter ferendum*; "We must manfully bear what comes from men,

and humbly what comes from above." The Pagan philosopher tells us, *Quod divinitus contingit, homo a se nulla arte dispellet*; "There is no fence against that which comes from Heaven, whose decrees are irreversible."

Your friends in Fleet-street are all well, both long coats and short coats, and so is your unalterable friend to love and serve you.

LETTER XLVIII.

From the same to Mr. T. C. at his house upon Tower Hill.

Sir,

To inaugurate a good and jovial new year to you, I send you a morning's draught, *viz.* a bottle of metheglin. Neither sir John Barleycorn or Bacchus had any thing to do with it, but it is the pure juice of the bee, the laborious bee, and king of insects. The Druids and old British bards were wont to take a carouse hereof before they entered into their speculations; and if you do so when your fancy labours with any thing, it will do you no hurt, and I know your fancy to be very good.

But this drink always carries a kind of state with it, for it must be attended with a brown toast; nor will it admit but of one good draught, and that in the morning: if more, it will keep humming in the head, and so speak too much of the house it comes from, I mean the hive, as I gave a caution elsewhere; and because the bottle might make more haste, I have made it go upon these poetic feet:—

*J. H. T. C. salutem, et annum Platonicum,
Non vitis, sed apis succum tibi mitto bibendum,
Quem legimus bardos olim potasse Britannos.
Qualibet in bacca vitis Megera laescit,
Qualibet in gutta melis Aglaia nitet.*

The juice of bees, not Bacchus, here behold, Which British bards were wont to quaff of old; The berries of the grape with Furies swell, But in the honeycomb the Graces dwell.

This alludes to a saying which the Turks have, "That there lurks a devil in every berry of the vine." So I wish you, as cordially as to myself, an auspicious and joyful new year, because you know I am your truly affectionate servant.

LETTER XLIX.

Lady Russel's Letter to the King Charles II.

(Indorsed by her: My letter to the king a few days after my dear lord's death.)

May it please your Majesty, I FIND my husband's enemies are not appeased with his blood, and still continue to misrepresent him to your majesty. It is a great addition to my sorrows to hear your majesty is prevailed upon to believe, that the paper he delivered to the sheriff at his death was not his own. I can truly say, and am ready in the solemnest manner to attest, that (during his imprisonment*) I often heard him discourse of the chiefest matters contained in that paper, in the same expressions he herein uses, as some of those few relations that were admitted to him can likewise aver. And sure it is an argument of no great force, that there is a phrase or two in it another uses, when nothing is more common than to take up such words we like, or are accustomed to in our conversation. I beg leave further to avow to your majesty, that all that is set down in the paper read to your majesty on Sunday night, to be spoken in my presence, is exactly true†; as I doubt not but the rest of the paper is, which was written at my request, and the author of it in all his conversation with my husband, that I was privy to, shewed himself a loyal subject to your majesty, a faithful friend to him, and a most tender and conscientious minister to his soul. I do therefore humbly beg your majesty would be so charitable to believe, that he, who in all his life was observed to act with the greatest clearness and sincerity, would not at the point of death do so disingenuous and false a thing, as to deliver for his own what was not properly and expressly so. And if after the loss, in such a manner, of the best husband in the world, I were capable of any consolation, your majesty only could afford it by having better thought of him; which when I was so importunate to speak with your majesty, I thought I had some reason to believe

* The words included in the parenthesis are crossed out.

† It contained an account of all that passed between Dr. Burnet and his lordship concerning his last speech and paper. It is called *The Journal*, in the *History of his own Times*, vol. i, p. 562.

I should have inclined you to, not from the credit of my word, but upon the evidence of what I had to say. I hope I have written nothing in this that will displease your majesty; if I have, I humbly beg of you to consider it as coming from a woman amazed with grief; and that you will pardon the daughter of a person who served your majesty's father in his greatest extremities (and your majesty in your greatest posts), and one that is not conscious of having ever done any thing to offend you (before). I shall ever pray for your majesty's long life and happy reign; who am with all humility, may it please your majesty, &c.

LETTER L.

From the same to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

31st January, 1684-5.

You pursue, good doctor, all ways of promoting comfort to my afflicted mind, and will encourage me to think the better of myself for that better temper of mind you judge you found me in, when you so kindly gave me a week of your time in London. You are highly in the right, that as quick a sense of sharpness on the one hand, and tenderness on the other, can cause, I labour under, and shall, I believe, to the end of my life, so eminently unfortunate in the close of it.

But I strive to reflect how large my portion of good things has been; and though they are passed away no more to return, yet I have a pleasant work to do, dress up my soul for my desired change, and fit it for the converse of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. Amongst whom my hope is my loved lord is one: and my often repeated prayer to my God is, that if I have a reasonable ground for that hope, it may give a refreshment to my poor soul.

Do not press yourself, sir, too greatly in seeking my advantage, but when your papers do come, I expect and hope they will prove such. The accidents of every day tell us of what a tottering clay our bodies are made. Youth nor beauty, greatness nor wealth, can prop it up. If it could, the lady Ossory had not so early left this world; she died (as an express acquainted her father this morning) on Sunday last, of a flux and mis-carrying. I heard also this day of a kinsman that is gone; a few years ago I should have had a more concerned sense

for sir Thomas Vernon*; his unfitness (as I doubt) I do lament indeed.

Thus I treat you, as I am myself, with objects of mortification. But you want none such in your solitude; and I, being unprovided of other, will leave you to your own thoughts, and ever continue, sir, your obliged servant.

My neighbours and tenants are under some distress, being questioned about accounts, and several leaves found torn out of the books, so that Kingdome and Trant offered 40,000*l.* for atonement; but having confessed two more were privy to this cutting out leaves, the king will have them discovered: till Monday they have time given them. You had given lady Julian one of those books.

LETTER LI.

From the same to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

Southampton-house, 17th July, 1685.

NEVER shall I, good doctor, I hope, forget your work (as I may term it) of labour and love; so instructive and comfortable do I find it, that at any time, when I have read any of your papers, I feel a heat within me to be repeating my thanks to you anew, which is all I can do towards the discharge of a debt you have engaged me in; and though nobody loves more than I to stand free from engagements I cannot answer, yet I do not wish for it here, I would have it as it is, and although I have the present advantage, you will have the future reward: and if I can truly reap what I know you design me by it, a religious and quiet submission to all providences, I am assured you

* Sir Thomas Vernon, on the jury against sir Samuel Barnardiston, knighted for his service in it, and then made foreman to convict Oates of perjury. Sir Sam. Barnardiston, 14th February, 1683-4, was fined 10,000*l.* for writing some letters, in which he used these expressions (*inter alia*): "The lord Howard appears despicable in the eyes of all men.—The brave lord Russel is afresh lamented.—It is generally said the earl of Essex was murdered.—The plot is lost here.—The duke of Monmouth said publicly, that he knew my lord Russel was as loyal subject as any in England, and that his majesty believed the same now.—The printer of the late lord Russel's speech was passed over with silence.—The sham protestant plot is quite lost and confounded, &c." He was committed for his fine to the King's Bench, continued prisoner four or five years, and great waste and destruction made on his estate.

will esteem to have attained it here in some measure. Never could you more seasonably have fed me with such discourses, and left me with expectations of new repasts, in a more seasonable time, than these my miserable months, and in those this very week in which I have lived over again that fatal day that determined what fell out a week after, and that has given me so long and so bitter a time of sorrow. But God has a compass in his providences that is out of our reach, and as he is all good and wise, that consideration should in reason slacken the fierce rages of grief. But sure, doctor, it is the nature of sorrow to lay hold on all things which give a new ferment to it; then how could I choose but feel it in a time of so much confusion as these last weeks have been, closing so tragically as they have done; and sure never any poor creature, for two whole years together, has had more awakers to quicken and revive the anguish of its soul than I have had: yet I hope I do most truly desire that nothing may be so bitter to me, as to think that I have in the least offended thee, O my God, and that nothing may be so marvellous in my eyes as the exceeding love of my Lord Jesus; that heaven being my aim, and the longing expectations of my soul, I may go through honour and dishonour, good report and bad report, prosperity and adversity, with some evenness of mind. The inspiring me with these desires is, I hope, a token of his never-failing love towards me, though an unthankful creature for all the good things I have enjoyed, and do still in the lives of hopeful children by so beloved a husband. God has restored me my little girl; the surgeon says she will do well. I should now hasten to give them the advantage of the country air, but am detained by the warning to see my uncle Ruvigny here, who comes to me, so I know not how to quit my house till I have received him, at least into it; he is upon his journey.

My lady Gainsborough came to this town last night, and I doubt found neither her own daughter nor lady Jane in a good condition of health. I had carried a surgeon on the day before to let my niece blood, by Dr. Loure's direction, who could not attend by reason my lord Radnor lay in extremity, and he was last night past hopes. My niece's complaint is a neglected cold, and he fears her to be something hectic, but I hope youth will

struggle and overcome: they are children whose least concerns touch me to the quick; their mother was a delicious friend; sure nobody has enjoyed more pleasure in the conversations and tender kindnesses of a husband and a sister than myself, yet, how apt am I to be fretful that I must not still do so! but I must follow that which seems to be the will of God, how unacceptable soever it may be to me. I must stop, for if I let my pen run on, I know not where it will end. I am, good doctor, with great faithfulness, your affectionate friend to serve you.

LETTER LII.

From Lady Russel to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

Woborne Abbey, 27th Nov. 1685.

As you profess, good doctor, to take pleasure in your writings to me, from the testimony of a conscience to forward my spiritual welfare, so do I to receive them as one to me of your friendship in both worldly and spiritual concerns; doing so, I need not waste my time nor yours to tell you they are very valuable to me. That you are so contented to read mine I make the just allowance for: not for the worthiness of them, I know it cannot be, but however, it enables me to keep up an advantageous conversation without scruple of being too troublesome. You say something sometimes, by which I should think you seasoned or rather tainted with being so much where compliment or praising is best learned; but I conclude, that often what one heartily wishes to be in a friend, one is apt to believe is so. The effect is not nought towards me, whom it animates to have a true not false title to the least virtue you are disposed to attribute to me. Yet I am far from such a vigour of mind as surmounts the secret discontent so hard a destiny as mine has fixed in my breast; but there are times the mind can hardly feel displeasure, as while such friendly conversation entertaineth it; then a grateful sense moves one to express the courtesy.

If I could contemplate the conducts of providence with the uses you do, it would give ease indeed, and no disastrous events should much affect us. The new scenes of each day make me often

conclude myself very void of temper and reason, that I still shed tears of sorrow and not of joy, that so good a man is landed safe on the happy shore of a blessed eternity; doubtless he is at rest, though I find none without him, so true a partner he was in all my joys and griefs; I trust the Almighty will pass by this my infirmity; I speak it in respect to the world, from whose enticing delights I can now be better weaned. I was too rich in possessions whilst I possessed him: all relish is now gone, I bless God for it, and pray, and ask of all good people (do it for me from such you know are so) also to pray that I may more and more turn the stream of my affections upwards, and set my heart upon the ever-satisfying perfections of God; not starting at his darkest providences, but remembering continually either his glory, justice, or power, is advanced by every one of them, and that mercy is over all his works, as we shall one day with ravishing delight see: in the mean time, I endeavour to suppress all wild imaginations a melancholy fancy is apt to let in; and say with the man in the Gospel, "I believe, help thou my unbelief."

If any thing I say suggest to you matter for a pious reflection, I have not hurt you but ease myself, by letting loose some of my crowded thoughts. I must not finish without telling you, I have not the book you mention of Seraphical Meditations of the bishop of Bath and Wells*, and should willingly see one here, since you design the present. I have sent you the last sheet of your papers, as the surest course; you can return it with the book. You would, sir, have been welcome to lord Bedford, who expresses himself hugely obliged to the bishop of Ely†, your friend; to whom you justly give the title of good, if the character he has very generally belongs to him. And who is good is happy; for he is only truly miserable, or wretchedly so, that has no joy here, nor hopes for any hereafter. I believe it may be near Christmas before my lord Bedford removes for the winter, but I have not yet discoursed him about it, nor how long he desires our company; so

* Kenn, bishop of Bath and Wells, of an ascetic course of life, and yet of a very lively temper.

† Turner, bishop of Ely, sincere and good-natured, of too quick imagination, and too defective a judgment.

whether I will come before him, or make one company, I know not; he shall please himself, for I have no will in these matters, nor can like one thing or way better than another, if the use and conveniences be alike to the young creatures, whose service is all the business I have in this world; and for their good I intend all diligence in the power of, sir, your obliged friend to serve you.

I am mightily in arrear; pray let me know what, and if I shall direct the paying it, or stay till I see you.

LETTER LIII.

Dr. Tillotson to Lady Russel.

[From Birch's Life of Tillotson.]

Canterbury, Nov 21, 1685.

Honoured madam,

WHEN I look back upon the date of your ladyship's letter, I blush to see it hath lain by me so long unanswered. And yet I assure you no day passeth, in which your ladyship and your children are not in my mind. But I know not how, in the hurry I am in, in London, one business presseth so hard upon another, that I have less time for the things to which I have most inclination. I am now for a while got out of the torment and noise of that great city, and do enjoy a little more repose.

It was a great trouble to me to hear of the sad loss your dear friend sustained during his short stay in England*. But in some circumstances, to die is to live. And that voice from heaven runs much in my mind, which St. John heard in his vision of the last (as I think) and most extreme persecution, which should befall the faithful servants of God, before the final downfall of Babylon, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth;" meaning, that they were happy, who were taken away before that terrible and utmost trial of the faith and patience of the saints. But however that be, I do greatly rejoice in the preservation of your children from the great danger they were in upon that occasion, and thank God heartily for it, because,

* The death of her cousin, niece of Mons. Ruigny.

whatever becomes of us, I hope they may live to see better things.

Just now came the news of the prorogation of the parliament to the 10th of February, which was surprising to us. We are not without hopes, that in the mean time things will be disposed to a better agreement against the next meeting. But when all is done, our greatest comfort must be, that we are all in the hands of God, and that he hath the care of us. And do not think, madam, that he loves you the less for having put so bitter a cup into your hand. He, whom he loved infinitely best of all mankind, drank much deeper of it.

I did hope to have waited upon my lord of Bedford at my return to London; but now I doubt this prorogation will carry him into the country before that time. I intreat you to present my most humble service to his lordship, to dear little master, and the young ladies. I am not worthy the consideration you are pleased to have of me; but I pray continually for you all, and ever shall be, madam, your ladyship's most faithful and humble servant.

LETTER LIV.

Lady Russel to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

15th January, 1685-6.

I PRESUME, doctor, you are now so settled in your retirement (for such it is in comparison of that you can obtain at London) that you are at leisure to peruse the inclosed papers; hereafter I will send them once a week, or oftener if you desire it.

Yesterday the lord Delamere passed his trial, and was acquitted*. I do bless God that he has caused some stop to the effusion of blood has been shed of late in this poor land. But, doctor, as diseased bodies turn the best nourishments, and even cordials, into the same sour humour that consumes and eats them up, just so do I. When I should rejoice with them that do rejoice, I seek a corner to

† Henry Booth, lord Delamere, tried for partaking in Monmouth's rebellion. Finch, solicitor-general, was very violent against him; but Saxon, the only positive evidence, appearing perjured, he was acquitted by his peers. He afterwards strenuously promoted the Revolution; in 1690 was created earl of Warrington; and died 1693.

weep in. I find I am capable of no more gladness; but every new circumstance, the very comparing my night of sorrow after such a day, with theirs of joy, does, from a reflection of one kind or other, rack my uneasy mind. Though I am far from wishing the close of theirs like mine, yet I cannot refrain giving some time to lament mine was not like theirs; but I certainly took too much delight in my lot, and would too willingly have built my tabernacle here; for which I hope my punishment will end with life.

The accounts from France are more and more astonishing; the perfecting the work is vigorously pursued, and by this time completed it is thought; all without exception having a day given them; only these I am going to mention have found so much grace as I will tell you. The countess du Roy* is permitted with two daughters to go within fourteen days to her husband, who is in Denmark, in that king's service; but five other of her children are put into monasteries. Mareschal Schomberg† and his wife are commanded to be prisoners in their house, in some remote part of France appointed them. My uncle and his wife are permitted to come out of France. This I was told for a truth last night, but I hope it needs a confirmation.

It is enough to sink the strongest heart to read the relations are sent over. How the children are torn from their mothers and sent into monasteries; their mothers to another: the husband to prison, or the gallies. These are amazing providences, doctor! God out of infinite mercy strengthen weak believers. I am too melancholy an intelligencer to be

* Countess du Roy, wife of Frederic Charles du Roy, knight of the Elephant, and generalissimo to the king of Denmark; his daughter, Henrietta, was the second wife of William Wentworth, earl of Strafford.

† Frederic de Schomberg, marshal of France, was created by king William, duke Schomberg, &c. 1689, killed at the battle of the Boyne, 1st July, 1690. He was son of count Schomberg, by lord Dndley's daughter. The count was killed, with several sons, at the battle of Prague, 1620. The duke was a man of great calmness, application, and conduct; of true judgment, exact probity, and an humble obliging temper. The persecution of the Protestants induced him to leave France and enter into king William's service. He was 82 years old at his death. His son Charles was mortally wounded at the battle of Marsiglia, 24th Sept. 1693.

very long, so will hasten to conclude, first telling you lord Talbot‡ is come out of Ireland, and brought husbands for his daughters-in-law; one was married on Tuesday to a lord Roffe, the other lord is Dungan; Walgrave that married the king's daughter is made a lord§. The brief for the poor Protestants was not sealed on Wednesday, as was hoped it would be: the chancellor hid it be laid by when it was offered him to seal. I am very really, doctor, your affectionate friend and servant.

LETTER IV.

Lady Russel to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

22d January, 1685-6.

I HAVE received and read your letters, good doctor. As you never fail of performing a just part to your friend, so it were pity you should not consider enough to act the same to yourself. I think you do: and all you say, that concerns your private affairs, is justly and wisely weighed; so let that rest. I acknowledge the same of the distinct paper which touches more nearly my sore; perhaps I ought to do it with some shame and confusion of face; and perhaps I do so, doctor, but my weakness is invincible, which makes me, as you phrase it, excellently possess past calamities: but he who took upon him our nature, felt our infirmities, and does pity us; and I shall receive of his fulness at the end of days, which I will silently wait for.

If you have heard of the dismal accident in this neighbourhood, you will easily believe Tuesday night was not a quiet one with us. About one o'clock in the night I heard a great noise in the square, so little ordinary, I called up a servant and sent her down to learn the occasion. She brought up a very sad one, that Montague house was on fire; and it was so indeed; it burnt with so great violence, the whole house was consumed by five o'clock. The wind blew strong this way, so that we lay under fire a great part of the time, the sparks and flames continually covering the house, and fill-

‡ Lord Richard Talbot, afterwards earl of Tyrconnel, a papist.

§ Henry lord Waldgrave of Chewton married the lady Henrietta Fitz-James, natural daughter to king James II. by Arabella Churchill, sister to John Duke of Marlborough; he retired to France in 1689, and died at Paris the same year.

ing the court. My boy awaked, and said he was almost stifed with smoke, but, being told the reason, would see it, and so was satisfied without fear; took a strange bed-fellow very willingly, lady Devonshire's youngest boy, whom his nurse had brought wrapt in a blanket. Lady Devonshire* came towards morning and lay here; and had done so still, but for a second ill accident: Her brother, lord Arran†, who has been ill of a fever twelve days, was despaired of yesterday morning, and spots appeared, so she resolved to see him, and not to return hither, but to Somerset house, where the queen offered her lodgings. He is said to be dead, and I hear this morning it is a great blow to the family: and that he was a most dutiful son and kind friend to all his family.

Thus we see what a day brings forth! and how momentary the things we set our hearts upon! O I could heartily cry out, "When will longed-for eternity come!" but our duty is to possess our souls with patience.

I am unwilling to shake off all hopes about the brief, though I know them that went to the chancellor‡ since the refusal to seal it, and his answer does not encourage one's hopes. But he is not a lover of smooth language, so in that respect we may not so soon despair§.

I fancy I saw the young man you mentioned to be about my son. One brought me six prayer books as from you; also distributed three or four in the house. I sent for him and asked him if there was no mistake? He said, No. And after some other questions I concluded him the same person. Doctor, I do assure you I put an entire trust in your sincerity to advise; but, as I told you, I shall ever take

* Mary, daughter to James Butler, duke of Ormond; married to William Cavendish, earl, afterwards duke, of Devonshire.

† He died January 26, 1685-6.

‡ George lord Jefferies, baron of Wem, very inveterate against lord Russel: He was, says Burnet, scandalously vicious, drunk every day, and furiously passionate, and, when lord chief justice, he even betrayed the decencies of his post, by not affecting to appear impartial, as became a judge, and by running upon all occasions into noisy declamations. He died in the Tower, April 18, 1689.

§ Dr. afterwards bishop Beveridge, objected to the reading the brief in the cathedral of Canterbury, as contrary to the rubric. Tillotson replied, "Doctor, doctor, Charity is above rubrics."

lord Bedford along in all the concerns of the child. He thinks it early yet to put him to learn in earnest; so do you, I believe. My lord is afraid, if we take one for it, he will put him to it; yet I think perhaps to overcome my lord in that, and assure him he shall not be pressed. But I am much advised, and indeed inclined, if I could be fitted to my mind, to take a Frenchman, so I shall do a charity, and profit the child also, who shall learn French. Here are many scholars come over, as are of all kinds, God knows.

I have still a charge with me, lady Devonshire's daughter, who is just come into my chamber; so must break off. I am, sir, truly your faithful servant.

The young lady tells me lord Arran is not dead, but rather better.

LETTER LVI.

Dean Tillotson to Lady Russel.

Honoured madam,
I RECEIVED both your letters; and before the latter came to my hands, I gave your ladyship some kind of answer to the first, as the time would let me, for the post staid for it. But having now a little more leisure, you will, I hope, give me leave to trouble you with a longer letter.

I was not at Hampton Court last Sunday, being almost tired out with ten weeks attendance, so that I have had no opportunity to try further in the business I wrote of in my last, but hope to bring it to some issue the next opportunity I can get to speak with the king. I am sorry to see in Mr. Johnson|| so broad a mix-

|| In a paper to justify lord Russel's opinion, "That resistance may be used in case our religion and rights should be invaded," as an answer to the dean's letter to his lordship of 20th July 1683, Johnson observes, that this opinion could not be wrested from his lordship at his death, notwithstanding the disadvantages at which he was taken, when he was practised upon to retract that opinion, and to bequeath a legacy of slavery to his country; and indeed the dean was so apprehensive of lady Russel's displeasure at his pressing his lordship, though with the best intentions, upon that subject, that when he was first admitted to her after her lord's death, he is said to have addressed her in this manner, "That he first thanked God, and then her ladyship, for that opportunity of justifying himself to her;" and they soon returned to the terms of a cordial and unreserved friendship. Mr. Johnson wrote Julian the Apostate to prove the legality of resistance, and an address to king James II'd's army; he was fined,

ture of human frailty, with so considerable virtues. But when I look into myself, I must think it pretty well, when any man's infirmities are in any measure overbalanced by his better qualities. This good man I am speaking of has at some times not used me over well; for which I do not only forgive him, when I consider for whose sake he did it, but do heartily love him.

The king, besides his first bounty to Mr. Walker*, whose modesty is equal to his merit, hath made him bishop of Londonderry, one of the best bishoprics in Ireland; that so he may receive the reward of that great service in the place where he did it. It is incredible how much every body is pleased with what the king hath done in this matter, and it is no small joy to me to see that God directs him to do so wisely.

I will now give your ladyship a short account of his majesty's disposal of our English Church preferments, which I think he has done as well as could be expected, in the midst of the powerful importunities of so many great men, in whom I discern too much of court art and contrivance for the preferment of their friends; yea, even in my good lord Nottingham, more than I could wish. This is a melancholy consideration to one in my situation, in which I do not see

imprisoned, pilloried, and whipt, after being degraded. The Revolution restored him to his liberty; the judgment against him in 1686 was declared illegal and cruel, and his degradation null; and the House of Lords recommended him to king William. He died 1703. He refused the rich deanery of Durham.

* Mr. Geo. Walker, justly famous for his defence of Londonderry, in Ireland (when Lunde the governor would have surrendered it to king James the 2d), was born of English parents in the county of Tyrone in that kingdom, and educated in the university of Glasgow in Scotland; he was afterwards rector of Donoughmore, not many miles from the city of Londonderry. Upon the Revolution, he raised a regiment for the defence of the Protestants; and upon intelligence of king James having a design to besiege Londonderry, retired thither, being at last chosen governor of it. After the raising of that siege, he came to England, where he was most graciously received by their majesties; and on the 19th of Nov. 1689, received the thanks of the House of Commons, having just before published an account of that siege, and a present of 5000*l*. He was created D.D. by the University of Oxford on the 26th Feb. 1689-90, in his return to Ireland, where he was killed the beginning of July 1690, at the passage of the Boyne, having resolved to serve that campaign before he took possession of his bishopric.

how it is possible so to manage a man's self between civility and sincerity, between being willing to give good words to all, and able to do good to very few, as to hold out an honest man, or even the reputation of being so, a year to an end.

I promised a short account, but I am long before I come to it. The dean of St. Paul's†, the bishop of Worcester; the dean of Peterborough‡, of Chichester. An humble servant of yours, dean of St. Paul's. The dean of Norwich§ is dean of Canterbury; and Dr. Stauley, clerk of his majesty's closet, is residentiary of St. Paul's; and Dr. Fairfax, dean of Norwich. The warden of All Souls|| in Oxford, is prebendary of Canterbury; and Mr. Nixon hath the other prebend there, void by the death of Dr. Jeffreys. These two last merited of the king in the West: Mr. Finch by going in early to him, and Mr. Nixon, who is my lord of Bath's chaplain, by carrying messages between the king and my lord of Bath, as the king himself told me, with the hazard of his life. St. Andrew's and Covent Garden are not yet disposed. Dr. Birch (which I had almost forgot) is prebendary of Westminster: and, which grieves me much, Mons. Allix put by at present; but my lord privy seal¶ would not he denied. The whole is as well as could easily be in the present circumstances.

But now begins my trouble. After I had kissed the king's hand for the deanery of St. Paul's, I gave his majesty my most humble thanks, and told him, that now he had set me at ease for the remainder of my life. He replied; "No such matter, I assure you;" and spoke plainly about a great place, which I dread to think of, and said, It was necessary for his service, and he must charge it upon my conscience." Just as he had said this, he was called to supper, and I had only time to say, that when his majesty was at leisure, I did believe I could satisfy him that it would be most for his service that I should continue in the station in which he had now placed me. This hath brought me into a real difficulty. For on the one hand it is hard to decline his majesty's commands, and much

† Dr. Stillingfleet.

‡ Dr. St. Patrick.

§ Dr. John Sharp.

|| Leopard Wm. Finch, fifth son of Heneage, earl of Winchelsea.

¶ Marquis of Halifax.

harder yet to stand out against so much goodness as his majesty is pleased to use towards me. On the other, I can neither bring my inclination nor my judgment to it. This I owe to the bishop of Salisbury, one of the worst and best friends I know; best, for his singular good opinion of me; and the worst, for directing the king to this method, which I know he did: as if his lordship and I had concerted the matter how to finish this foolish piece of dissimulation, in running away from a bishopric* to catch an archbishopric. This fine device hath thrown me so far into the briars, that, without his majesty's great goodness, I shall never get off without a scratched face. And now I will tell your ladyship the bottom of my heart. I have of a long time, I thank God for it, devoted myself to the public service without any regard for myself; and to that end have done the best I could in the best manner I was able. Of late God hath been pleased by very severe ways†, but in great goodness to me, to wean me perfectly from the love of this world; so that worldly greatness is now not only undesirable, but distasteful to me. And I do verily believe, that I shall be able to do as much or more good in my present station than in a higher, and shall not have one jot less interest or influence upon any others to any good purpose; for the people naturally love a man that will take great pains and little preferment. But, on the other hand, if I

could force my inclination to take this great place, I foresee that I should sink under it, and grow melancholy and good for nothing, and after a little while die as a fool dies.

But this, madam, is a great deal too much, upon one of the worst and nicest subjects in the world—a man's self.

As I was finishing this long letter, which if your goodness will forgive I hope never to have occasion to try it so far again, I received your letter, and shall say no more of Dr. More, of whose preaching I always knew your ladyship's opinion. The person I mentioned was Mr. Kidder, on whom the king has bestowed the deanery of Peterborough, and therefore cannot have it. I am fully of your ladyship's opinion, that what my lord Bedford does in this matter must not appear to be done by him, for fear of bringing other importunities upon the king. If my lord thinks well of Dr. Horneck, Dr. More would then certainly have St. Andrew's.

I thank God for the health your family enjoys, as for that of my own; and equally pray for the continuance of it, and all other blessings. I would fain find room to tender my humble service to my lord Bedford, my lord Russel, and two of the best young ladies I know. I am, honoured madam, more than I can express, your most obliged and obedient servant.

LETTER LVII.

Lady Russel to the dean of St. Paul's.

September, 1689.

WHENEVER, Mr. Dean, you are disposed, and at leisure to give it me, I can be well content, I assure you, to read the longest letter you can write. But I had not so soon told you a truth you cannot choose but know, if this paper was not to be hastened to you with a little errand that I am well enough pleased to be employed in; because the effect will be good, though the cause does not please me; being you said Mr. Kidder‡ cannot have Covent Garden, because he is dean of Peterborough (though I do not conceive why, unless it is because he is great and others are not). But lord

‡ Rd. Kidder, afterwards bishop of Bath and Wells (in Kenn's stead, 1691), was killed with his lady at Wells, by the fall of a stack of chimneys during the high wind, 27th Nov. 1703.

* Tillotson wrote before to a nobleman (supposed the earl of Portland) begging he might be excused from accepting a bishopric. Birch remarks, instances of this kind of self-denial will perhaps be thought rare in any age; but there was a remarkable one under Henry the Fifth of another dean of Canterbury, well known by his embassies and public negotiations, Dr. Nicholas Wotton, great uncle of sir Henry Wotton; this great politician, as well as divine, being informed of an intention to advance him to the mitre, wrote to doctor Bellasis from Dusseldorp, Nov. 11th, 1539, requesting him, for the passion of God, to convey that bishopric from him. So I might (adds she) avoid it without displeasure, I would surely never meddle with it: there be enough that be meet for it, and will not refuse it. I cannot marvel enough, *cur obtrudatur non cupienti immo ne idoneo quidem*. My mind is as troubled as my writing is. Yours to his little power, Nicholas Wotton; add whatsoever you will more to it, if you add not Bishop.

† The loss of his children, and having been seized with an apoplectic disorder.

Bedford leans strongly to offer him to the king: it is from what you said to me has made him do so. Yet if you judge he should not now be the man, I am enjoined to obtain from you some character of one Mr. Freeman*, and Mr. Williams†: the last I have heard you speak well of, but I did not heed his just character. What you think fit to say to me shall not be imparted but in general terms, if you like that best; though lord Bedford is as close as can be desired, and as well inclined as possible to do the best, and will have me say something of these men before he fixes, which my lord Shrewsbury advises him to do quickly.

More‡ he is averse to; Horneck§ the parish is also, as he is well informed, to a high degree. So Kidder, Williams, and Freeman are before him. I desire two or three lines upon this subject, by the first post if you please.

Though my paper is full enough, especially to a man that has no more spare time than you have, yet I must just touch upon some other parts of your letter, being they touch me most sensibly. I bless God that inclines the heart of our king to do well; it looks as if God meant a full mercy to these long threatened kingdoms. I thank Mr. Dean very heartily for those thoughts that influence and heighten his charity to Mr. J——n. I will not say that I do more, but you must needs know. Mr. Dean, now a few words to your own concern, that bears so heavy upon your mind, and I have done. I know not if I should use the phrase, “Integrity is my idol,” but I am sure I admire and love it hugely wherever I meet it. I would never have a sincere passion crossed. I do pity you, Mr. Dean, and think you have a hard game upon your hands, which, if it should happen you cannot play off your own way, you can do better than a man less mortified to the world could; being if you serve the interest of religion and the king’s, you are doing what you have dedicated yourself to, and therefore

can be more regardless of the ignorant or wicked censurer; for, upon my word, I believe you will incur no other: your character is above it, if what you fear should come upon you. But as I conceive there are six months yet to deliberate upon this matter, you know the old saying, “Many things fall out between the cup and the lip:” and pray do not fill your head with the fears of a trouble, though never so great, that is at a distance, and may never be; for if you think too much on a matter you dread, it will certainly disturb your quiet, and that will infallibly your health, and you cannot but see, sir, that would be of a bad consequence. The king is willing to hear you. You know your own heart to do good, and you have lived some time, and have had experience. You say well that such an one is the best and worst friend. I think I should have had more tenderness to the will or temper of my friend: and for his justification, one may say, he prefers good to many, before gratifying one single person, and a public good ought to carry a man a great way. But I see your judgment (if your inclination does not bias too far) is heartily against him in this matter, that you think you cannot do so much good then as now. We must see if you can convince him thereof; and when he is master of that notion, then let him labour to make your way out of those briars he has done his part to bring you into; though something else would have done it without him, I believe, if I am not mistaken in this, no more than I am that this letter is much too long, from, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Dean Tillotson to Lady Russel.

Edmonton, Sept. 24, 1689.

Hon. madam,

JUST now I received your ladyship’s letter. Since my last, and not before, I understand the great averseness of the parish from Dr. Horneck: so that if my lord of Bedford had liked him, I could not have thought it fit, knowing how necessary it is to the good effect of a man’s ministry, that he do not lie under any great prejudice with the people. The two, whom the bishop of Chichester hath named, are, I think, of the worthiest of the city ministers, since Mr. Kidder declines it, for the reason given by the bi-

* Dr. Freeman died dean of Peterborough, 1707.

† Williams, afterwards bishop of Chichester, died 1709.

‡ More died bishop of Ely, 1714.

§ Horneck died prebendary of Westminster, 1696-7.

shop, and, if he did not, could not have it; not because of any inconsistency in the preferments, but because the king, having so many obligations yet to answer, cannot at the same time give two such preferments to one man. For the persons mentioned, if comparison must be made between two very good men, I will tell your ladyship my free thoughts of them.

Mr. Williams is really one of the best men I know, and most unwearied in doing good, and his preaching very weighty and judicious. The other is a truly pious man, and of a winning conversation. He preaches well, and hath much the more plausible delivery, and, I think, a stronger voice. Both of them (which I had almost forgot) have been steady in all changes of times. This is the plain truth; and yet I must not conceal one particular and present advantage on Dr. Freeman's side. On Sunday night last the king asked me concerning a city minister, whose name he had forgot; but said, he had a very kind remembrance of him, having had much conversation with him, when his majesty was very young in Holland, and wondered he had never seen him since he came into England.

I could not imagine who he should be, till his majesty told me he was the English ambassador's chaplain above twenty years ago; meaning sir William Temple's. Upon that I knew it was Dr. Freeman. The king said, that was his name, and desired me to find him out, and tell him that he had not forgot him, but remembered with pleasure the acquaintance he had with him many years ago; and had charged me, when there was an opportunity, to put him in mind of him. This I thought both great goodness in the king, and modesty in Dr. Freeman* never to shew himself to the king all this while. By this your ladyship will judge who is like to be most acceptable to the king, whose satisfaction, as well as service, I am obliged to regard, especially in the disposal of his own preferments, though Mr. Williams be much more my friend.

I mentioned Mr. Johnson again, but his majesty put on other discourse, and my lord privy seal told me yesterday morning, that the king thought it a little

* Dr. Freeman was instituted to the rectory of Covent Garden, Dec. 28, 1689.

hard to give pensions out of his purse, instead of church preferments; and tells me Mr. Johnson is very sharp upon me. His lordship called it railing, but it shall not move me in the least. His lordship asked me, whether it would not be well to move the king to give him a good bishopric in Ireland, there being several void. I thought it very well, if it would be acceptable. His lordship said, that was all one; the offer would stop many mouths as well as his; which, I think, was well considered.

I will say no more of myself, but only thank your ladyship for your good advice, which I have always a great disposition to follow, and a great deal of reason, being assured it is sincere as well as wise. The king hath set upon me again, with greater earnestness of persuasion than is fit for one that may command. I begged as earnestly to be considered in this thing, and so we parted upon good terms. I hope something will happen to hinder it. I put it out of my mind as much as I can, and leave it to the good providence of God for the thing to find its own issue. To that I commend you and yours, and am, madam, yours, by all possible obligations.

If Mr. Johnson refuse this offer, and it should be my hard fortune not to be able to get out of this difficulty, which I will, if it be possible to do it without provocation, I know one that will do more for Mr. Johnson than was desired of the king, but still as from the king, for any thing that he shall know. But I hope some much better way will be found, and that there will be neither occasion nor opportunity for this †.

LETTER LIX.

Lady Russel to Lady Sunderland.

I THINK I understand almost less than any body, yet I knew better things than to be weary of receiving what is so good as my lady Sunderland's letters; or not to have a due regard of what is so valuable as her esteem and kindness, with her promises to enjoy it my whole life. Truly, madam, I can find no fault but

* The king granted Johnson 100*l*. a year for his own and his son's life, with 100*l*. in money, and a place of 100*l*. a year for his son.

one, and that is constantly in all the favours you direct to me, an unfortunate useless creature in the world, yet your ladyship owns me as one had been of some service to you. Alas! I know I was not, but my intention was pure; I pitied your sorrow, I was hearty in wishing you ease, and if I had an occasion for it, I could be diligent, but no further ability; and you are very good to receive it kindly. But so unhappy a solicitor as I was once for my poor self and family, my heart misgives me when I aim at any thing of that kind any more. Yet I hope I have at last learned to make the will of God, when declared, the rule of my content, and to thank him for all the hard things I suffer, as the best assurances of a large share in that other blessed state; and if what is dear to us is got thither before us, the sense what they enjoy, and we in a little while shall with them, ought to support us and our friends.

LETTER LX.

Lady Russel to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

Woborne Abbey, 28th August, 1690.

I ASSURE you, good doctor, I was very well pleased this evening to receive another letter from you; and much more than ordinary, because your last had some gentle hints in it, as if you thought I had taken some offence, though you kindly again said you could not, or would not, imagine it, not being conscious of omission or commission, and indeed you have good reason for saying so; I will at any time justify you in it, and do more commend your belief, that I either had not your letters, or was not well, than I could your mistrust of me for what will never happen. But an old dated paper has convinced you, and a newer had, if I had known where to have found you; for in yours of the 5th of August you intimate that you meant (if it did not too much offend the eyes of a friend of mine that were weak) to make a stay at Windsor of ten days longer, and made no mention then whether you went. Now truly I had that letter, when I was obliged to write much to such as would congratulate my being well again, some in kindness, and some in ceremony. But so it was, that when I went to write, I found I should not

know where to send it, so I deferred it till I had learnt that. I sent to Mrs. Smith, she could not tell; I bid John send to Richard at Straton to know if you were at Chilton, for I know lady Gainsborough was not there then, but now you have informed me yourself.

By report I fear poor lady Gainsborough is in new trouble, for though she has all the help of religion to support her, yet that does not shut us out from all sorrow; it does not direct us to insensibility, if we could command it, but to a quiet submission to the will of God, making his ours as much as we can: indeed, doctor, you are extremely in the right to think that my life has been so embittered, it is now a very poor thing to me; yet I find myself careful enough of it. I think I am useful to my children, and would endure hard things, to do for them till they can do for themselves; but, alas! I am apt to conclude if I had not that, yet I should still find out some reason to be content to live, though I am weary of every thing, and of the folly, the vanity, the madness of man most of all.

There is a shrinking from the separation of the soul from the body, that is implanted in our natures, which enforces us to conserve life; and it is a wise providence; for who would else endure much evil, that is not taught the great advantages of patient suffering? I am heartily sorry, good doctor, that you are not exempt, which I am sure you are not, when you cannot exercise your care as formerly among your flock at Cotenham*. But I will not enlarge on this matter, nor any other at this time. That I might be certain not to omit this respect to you, I have begun with it, and have many behind, to which I must hasten, but first desire you will present my most humble service to my lady; I had done myself the honour to write to her, just as I believe she was writing to me, but I will thank her yet for that favour; either trouble, or the pleasure of her son's settlement, engrosses her, I apprehend, at this time, and business I know is an attendant of the last. I am, sir, your constant friend and servant.

* Ejected as a nonjuror.

LETTER LXI.

Dean Tillotson to Lady Russel.

Edmonton, Oct. 9, 1690.

Hon. madam,
 SINCE I had the honour of your letter, I was tempted to have troubled you with one of mine upon the sad occasion of your late great loss of two so near relations, and so near together*. But I considered, why should I pretend to be able either to instruct or comfort my lady Russel, who hath borne things much more grievous with so exemplary a meekness and submission to the will of God, and knows, as well as I can tell her, that there is no remedy in these cases but patience, nor any comfort but in the hopes of the happy meeting of our deceased friends in a better life, in which sorrow and tears shall have no more place to all eternity!

And now I crave leave to impart something of my own trouble to your ladyship. On Sunday last the king commanded me to wait upon him the next morning at Kensington. I did so, and met with what I feared. His majesty renewed his former gracious offer, in so pressing a manner, and with so much kindness, that I hardly knew how to resist it. I made the best acknowledgments I could of his undeserved grace and favour to me, and begged of him to consider all the consequences of this matter, being well assured, that all that storm which was raised in convocation the last year by those who will be the Church of England was upon my account, and that the bishop of L—— was at the bottom of it, out of a jealousy that I might be a hindrance to him in attaining what he desires, and what, I call God to witness, I would not have. And I told his majesty, that I was still afraid that his kindness to me would be greatly to his prejudice, especially if he carried it so far as he was then pleased to speak. For I plainly saw they could not bear it; and that the effects of envy and ill-will towards me would terminate upon him. To which he replied, that if the thing were once done, and they saw no remedy, they would give over, and think of making the best of it; and therefore he must de-

sire me to think seriously of it; with other expressions not fit for me to repeat. To all which I answered, that in obedience to his majesty's commands I would consider of it again, though I was afraid I had already thought more of it than had done me good; and must break through one of the greatest resolutions of my life, and sacrifice at once all the ease and contentment of it; which yet I would force myself to do, were I really convinced that I was in any measure capable of doing his majesty and the public that service which he was pleased to think I was. He smiled and said, "You talk of trouble; I believe you will have much more ease in it than in the condition in which you now are." Thinking not fit to say more, I humbly took leave.

And now, madam, what shall I do? My thoughts were never at such a plunge. I know not how to bring my mind to it; and, on the other hand, though the comparison is very unequal, when I remember how I saw the king affected in the case of my lord Shrewsbury†, I find myself in great strait, and would not for all the world give him the like trouble. I pray God to direct me to that which he sees and knows to be best, for I know not what to do. I hope I shall have your prayers, and would be glad of your advice, if the king would spare me so long. I pray God to preserve you and yours. I am, honoured madam, &c.

LETTER LXII.

Lady Russel to the Dean of St. Paul's.

About the middle of October, 1690.
 YOUR letters will never trouble me, Mr. Dean; on the contrary, they are comfortable refreshments to my, for the most part, over-burdened mind, which, both by nature and by accident, is made so weak, that I cannot bear, with that constancy I should, the losses I have lately felt; I can say, Friends and acquaintances thou hast hid out of my sight; but I hope it shall not disturb my peace. These were young, and as they had begun their race of life after me, so I desired they might have ended it also.

† When the earl resigned the post of secretary of state, about 1690; to divert him from which, dean Tillotson had been sent to his lordship by the king.

* The death of her sister, the countess of Montague, and of her nephew, Wriothsley Baptist, earl of Gainsborough.

But happy are those whom God retires in his grace ; I trust these were so ; and then no age can be amiss ; to the young it is not too early, nor to the aged too late. Submission and prayer is all we know that we can do towards our own relief in our distress, or to disarm God's anger, either in our public and private concerns. The scene will soon alter to that peaceful and eternal home in prospect. But in this time of our pilgrimage, vicissitudes of all sorts is every one's lot. And this leads me to your case, sir.

The time seems to be come that you must put anew in practice that submission* you have so powerfully both tried yourself, and instructed others to. I see no place to escape at ; you must take up the cross and bear it : I faithfully believe it has the figure of a very heavy one to you, though not from the cares of it ; since, if the king guesses right, you toil more now. But this work is of your own choosing, and the dignity of the other is what you have bent your mind against, and the strong resolve of your life has been to avoid it. Had this even proceeded to a vow, it is, I think, like the virgins of old, to be dissolved by the father of your country. Again, though contemplation, and a few friends well chosen, would be your grateful choice, yet, if charity, obedience, and necessity, call you into the great world, and where enemies compass round about, must not you accept it ? And each of these, in my mean apprehension, determines you to do it. In short, it will be a noble sacrifice you will make ; and I am confident you will find as a reward, kind and tender supports, if you do take the burthen upon you : there is, as it were, a commanding Providence in the manner of it. Perhaps I do as sincerely wish your thoughts at ease as any friend you have, but I think you may purchase that too dear ; and if you should come to think so too, they would then be as restless as before.

Sir, I believe you would be as much a common good as you can : consider how few of ability and integrity this age produces. Pray do not turn this matter too much in your head ; when one has once

turned it every way, you know that more does but perplex, and one never sees the clearer for it. Be not stiff, if it be still urged to you. Conform to the Divine Will, which has set it so strongly into the other's mind, and be content to endure ; it is God calls you to it. I believe it was wisely said, that when there is no remedy they will give over, and make the best of it, and so I hope no ill will terminate on the king : and they will lay up their arrows, when they perceive they are shot in vain at him or you, upon whom no reflection that I can think of can be made that is ingenious ; and what is pure malice you are above being affected with.

I wish, for many reasons, my prayers were more worthy ; but such as they are, I offer them with a sincere zeal to the Throne of Grace for you, in this strait, that you may be led out of it, as shall best serve the great ends and designs of God's glory.

LETTER LXIII.

Lady Russel to ——— (supposed the Bishop of Salisbury).

16th October, 1690.

I HAVE, my lord, so upright an heart to my friends, that though your great weight of business had forced you to a silence of this kind, yet I should have had no doubt, but that one I so distinguish in that little number God has left me, does join with me to lament my late losses : the one was a just, sincere man, and the only son of a sister and a friend I loved with too much passion ; the other my last sister, and I ever loved her tenderly.

It pleases me to think that she deserves to be remembered by all those who knew her. But after above forty years acquaintance with so amiable a creature, one must needs, in reflecting, bring to remembrance so many engaging endearments as are yet at present imbittering and painful ; and indeed we may be sure, that when any thing below God is the object of our love, at one time or another it will be matter of our sorrow. But a little time will put me again into my settled state of mourning ; for a mourner I must be all my days upon earth, and there is no need I should be other. My glass runs low. The world

* Submission alludes to Tillotson's letter to lord Russel against resistance;—a shrewd hint of the dean's endeavours to persuade lord Russel to submit to the doctrine of passive obedience.

does not want me, nor I want that : my business is at home, and within a narrow compass. I must not deny, as there was something so glorious in the object of my biggest sorrow, I believe that, in some measure, kept me from being then overwhelmed. So now it affords me, together with the remembrance how many easy years we lived together, thoughts that are joy enough for one who looks no higher than a quiet submission to her lot ; and such pleasures in educating my young folks as surmount the cares that it will afford. If I shall be spared the trial, where I have most thought of being prepared to bear the pain, I hope I shall be thankful, and I think I ask it faithfully, that it may be in mercy not in judgment. Let me rather be tortured here, than they or I be rejected in that other blessed peaceful home to all ages, to which my soul aspires. There is something in the younger going before me, that I have observed all my life to give a sense I cannot describe ; it is harder to be borne than a bigger loss, where there has been spun out a longer thread of life. Yet I see no cause for it, for every day we see the young fall with the old : but methinks it is a violence upon nature.

A troubled mind has a multitude of these thoughts. Yet I hope I master all murmurings : if I have had any, I am sorry, and will have no more, assisted by God's grace ; and rest satisfied, that whatever I think, I shall one day be entirely satisfied what God has done and shall do will be best, and justify both his justice and mercy. I meant this as a very short epistle : but you have been some years acquainted with my infirmity, and have endured it, though you never had waste time, I believe, in your life ; and better times do not, I hope, make your patience less. However, it will become me to put an end to this, which I will do, signing myself cordially your, &c.

LETTER LXIV.

Lady Russel to Lord Cavendish.

29th October, 1690.

THOUGH I know my letters do lord Cavendish no service, yet, as a respect I love to pay him, and to thank him also for his last from Limbeck, I had not been so long silent, if the death of two

persons both very near and dear to me had not made me so uncomfortable to myself, that I knew I was utterly unfit to converse where I would never be ill company. The separation of friends is grievous. My sister Montague was one I loved tenderly ; my lord Gainsborough was the only son of a sister I loved with too much passion : they both deserved to be remembered kindly by all that knew them. They both began their race long after me, and I hoped should have ended it so too ; but the great and wise Disposer of all things, and who knows where it is best to place his creatures, either in this or in the other world, has ordered it otherwise. The best improvement we can make in these cases, and you, my dear lord, rather than I, whose glass runs low, while you are young, and I hope have many happy years to come, is, I say, that we should all reflect there is no passing through this to a better world without some crosses, and the scene sometimes shifts so fast, our course of life may be ended before we think we have gone half way ; and that an happy eternity depends on our spending well or ill that time allotted us here for probation.

Live virtuously, my lord, and you cannot die too soon, nor live too long. I hope the last shall be your lot, with many blessings attending it. Your, &c.

LETTER LXV.

Archbishop Tillotson to Lady Russel.

June 23, 1691*.

Honoured madam,

I RECEIVED your ladyship's letter, together with that to Mr. Fox, which I shall return to him on Wednesday morning, when I have desired Mr. Kemp to send him to me.

I entreat you to give my very humble service to my lord of Bedford, and to let his lordship know how far I have been concerned in this affair. I had notice first from Mr. Attorney-general and Mr. Solicitor, and then from my lord ———, that several persons, upon the account of publishing and dispersing several libels against me, were secured in order to prosecution. Upon which I went to wait upon them severally, and earnestly de-

* From his draught in short-hand.

sired of them, that nobody might be punished upon my account: that this was not the first time I had experience of this kind of malice, which, how unpleasant soever to me, I thought it the wisest way to neglect, and the best to forgive it*. None of them said any thing to me of my lord Russel, nor did it ever come into my thought to hinder any prosecution upon his account, whose reputation, I can truly say, is much dearer to me than mine own; and I was much more troubled at the barbarous usage done to his memory, and especially since they have aggravated it by dispersing more copies; and, as I find by the letter to Mr. Fox, are supported in their insolence by a strong combination, I cannot but think it very fit for my lord Bedford to bring them to condign punishment.

Twice last week I had my pen in my hand to have provoked you to a letter; and that I might once in my life have been beforehand with you in this way of kindness. I was both times hindered by the breaking in of company upon me. The errand of it would have been to have told you, that whether it be from stupidity, or from a present astonishment at the danger of my condition, or from some other cause, I find, that I bear the burden I dreaded so much a good deal better than I could have hoped. David's acknowledgment to God runs in my mind, "Who am I, O Lord God, or what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto; and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God †." I hope that the same providence of God which hath once overruled me in this thing will some way or other turn it to good.

The queen's extraordinary favour to me, to a degree much beyond my expectation, is no small support to me; and I flatter myself with hopes, that my friends will continue their kindness to me; especially that the best friend I ever had will not be the less so to me now that I need friends most.

I pray to God continually to preserve you and yours, and particularly at this time to give my lady Cavendish a happy

meeting with her lord, and to grant them both a long and happy life together. I am, madam, your most faithful and humble servant.

LETTER LXVI.

Lady Russel to ——— (supposed Archbishop Tillotson).

24th July, 1697.

IN wants and distresses of all kinds, one naturally flies to a sure friend, if one is blessed with any such. This is the reason of the present address to you, which is burthened with this request, if you think it fit, to give the inclosed to the queen. My letter is a petition to her majesty, to bestow upon a gentleman a place, that is now fallen by the death of Mr. Herbert; it is auditor of Wales, value about 400*l.* a year. He is, if I do not extremely mistake, fit for it, and worthy of it; he is knight of the shire for Carmarthenshire; it would please me on several accounts, if I obtain it. Now every thing is so soon chopt upon and gone, that a slow way would defeat me, if nothing else does; and that I fear from lord Devonshire if he was in town; besides, I should not so distinctly know the queen's answer, and my success, as I shall I know do by your means, if you have no scruple to deliver my letter; if you have, pray use me as I do you, and in the integrity of your heart tell me so. I could send it to lady Darby; it is only the certainty of some answer makes me pitch as I do. Nay perhaps it were more proper to send it to the queen's secretary; but I am not versed in the court ways, it is so lately since I have loved them. Therefore be free, and do as you think most fit.

I intend not to detain you long; but the many public and signal mercies we have of late received are so reviving, notwithstanding the black and dismal scenes which are constantly before me, and particularly on these sad months, I must feel the compassions of a wise and good God, to these late sinking nations, and to the Protestant interest all the world over, and all good people also. I raise my spirits all I can, and labour to rejoice in the prospect of more happy days, for the time to come, than some ages have been blessed with. The good-

* Upon a bundle of libels found among his papers after his death he put no other inscription than this; "These are libels; I pray God forgive the authors: I do."

† 1 Chron. xvii. 16, 17.

ness of those instruments God has called forth to work this great work by, swells one's hopes.

LETTER LXVII.

From the same to Lady ——— (supposed Arlington).*

10th October, 1691.

My dear sister, I have not yet had resolution to speak to you this way, nor know I now what to say. Your misfortune is too big to hope that any thing I offer can allay the present rage of your sorrow. I pray for you, and I pity you, which is all I can do: and that I do most feelingly, not knowing how soon your case may be mine: and I want from you what I would most willingly furnish you with, some consolation and truce from your extreme lamentation.

I hope that by this time your reason begins to get a power over your wasted spirits, and that you will let nature relieve herself. She will do it if you do not obstruct her. There is a time and period for all things here. Nature will first prevail; but as soon as we can we must think what is our duty, and pursue it as well as we are able. I beseech God to teach you to submit to this unlooked for, and to appearance sadly severe providence, and endue you with a quiet spirit, to wait for the day of consolation, when joy will be our portion to all eternity: in that day we shall meet again all our pious friends, all that have died in their innocence, and with them live a life of innocence, and purity, and gladness for ever. Fit your thoughts with these undoubted truths, my dear sister, as much and as often as is possible. I know no other cure for such diseases; nor shall we miss one, if we endeavour, with God's grace assisting, which he certainly gives to such as ask. God give you refreshments. I am your, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

From the same to ———.

18th October, 1691.

THE misfortunes of such as one extremely esteems grow our own; so that if my constant sad heart were not so

* On the death of one of her daughters.

soon touched as it is with deplorable accidents, I should yet feel a great deal of your just mourning; if sharing a calamity could ease you, that burden would be little: for as depraved an age as we live in, there is such a force in virtue and goodness, that all the world laments with you; and yet sure, madam, when we part from what we love most that is excellent, it is our best support, that nature, who will be heard first, does suffer reason to take place.

What can relieve so much, as that our friend died after a well-spent life? Some losses are so surprising and so great, one must not break in too soon, and therefore my sense of your calamity confined me to only a solicitous inquiry; and I doubt it is still a mistaken respect to dwell long upon such a subject. I will do no more than sign this truth, that I am your, &c.

LETTER LXIX.

From the same to Dr. Fitzwilliam.

July 21st, 1692.

I WILL but say very little for myself, why you are so long without hearing from me, yet I could say much to my justification, but am more willing to come to the more touching and serious part of your last letter: not but I should be very sorry indeed, if I suspected you had a thought I were unworthy towards you; I dare say you raise none upon appearances, and other reasons you shall never have. In short, my daughter Cavendish being ill, carried me twice a day to Arlington house, where I stayed till twelve and one o'clock at night, and much business, being near leaving London, and my eyes serving me no longer by candle-light, which, perhaps, was the biggest let of all, and hindered my doing what I desired and ought to do.

But to come to the purpose of yours, which I received the 13th of this lamentable month, the very day of that hard sentence pronounced against my dear friend and husband: it was the fast day, and so I had the opportunity of retiring without any taking notice of it, which pleases me best. What shall I say, doctor? That I do live by your rules? No: I should lie. I bless God it has long been my purpose, with some endea-

vour, through mercy to do it. I hope I may conclude I grieve without sinning; yet I cannot attain to that love of God and submission to all his providences that I can rejoice in: however, I bless him for his infinite mercy, in a support that is not wrought from the world (though my heart is too much bound up in the blessings I have yet left): and I hope chiefly he has enabled me to rejoice in him as my everlasting portion, and in the assured hope of good things in the other world.

Good doctor, we are travelling the same way, and hope through mercy to meet at the same happy end of all our labours here, in an eternal rest; and it is of great advantage to that attainment, communicating pious thoughts to each other: nothing on this side heaven goes so near it; and being where God is, it is heaven. If he be in our hearts there will be peace and satisfaction, when one recollects the happiness of such a state (which, if my heart deceives me not, I hope is mine); and I will try to experience more and more that blessed promise, "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you ease." This day, and this subject, induces me to be very long, and might to another be too tedious; but I know it is not so to Dr. Fitzwilliam, who uses to feast in the house of mourning. However, my time to open my chamber door is near; and I take some care not to affect in these retirements. In all circumstances I remain, sir, your constantly obliged friend and servant.

LETTER LXX.

Lady Russel to Lady ——— Russel.

If ever I could retaliate with my sister Russel, it would be now, on the subject of death, when I have all this my saddest month been reflecting on what I saw and felt; and yet what can I say more than to acquiesce with you, that it is a solemn thing to think of the consequences of death to believers and unbelievers! That it is a contemplation ought to be of force to make us diligent for the approaching change, I must own; yet I doubt it does so but on a few. That you are one of those happy ones I conclude, if I knew no more reason for it than the bare con-

clusion of yours, that the bare meditation is sufficient to provoke to care: for when a heart is so well touched it will act: and who has perhaps by an absolute surrender of herself so knit her soul to God, as will make her dear in his sight. We lie under innumerable obligations to be his entirely; and nothing should be so attracting to us as his miraculous love in sending his Son; but my still smart sorrow for earthly losses makes me know I loved inordinately, and my profit in the school of adversity has been small, or I should have long since turned my mourning into rejoicing thankfulness, that I had such a friend to lose; that I saw him I loved as my own soul take such a prospect of death as made him, when brought to it, walk through the dark and shaded valley (notwithstanding the natural aversion to separation) without fearing evil: for if we in our limited degrees of goodness will not forsake those that depend on us, much less can God cast us from him when we seek to him in our calamity. And though he denied my greatest and repeated prayers, yet he has not denied me the support of his holy Spirit, in this my long day of calamity, but enabled me in some measure to rejoice in him as my portion for ever; who has provided a remedy for all our griefs, by his sure promises of another life, where there is no death, nor any pain or trouble, but a fulness of joy in the presence of God, who made us and loves us for ever.

LETTER LXXI.

Archbishop Tillotson to Lady Russel.

Lambeth House, August 26th, 1693.

Madam,

Though nobody rejoices more than myself in the happiness of your ladyship and your children, yet in the hurry in which you must needs have been, I could not think it fit for to give you the disturbance so much as of a letter, which otherwise had, both in friendship and good manners, been due upon this great occasion. But now that busy time is in a good measure over, I cannot forbear after so many as, I am sure, have been before me, to congratulate with your ladyship this happy match of your daughter; for so I heartily pray it may prove, and have great reason to believe it will, because I cannot but look upon it as part of the

comfort and reward of your patience and submission to the will of God, under that sorest and most heavy affliction that could have befallen you; and when God sends and intends a blessing, it shall have no sorrow or evil with it.

I entreat my lord Ross and his lady to accept of my humble service, and my hearty wishes of great and lasting happiness.

My poor wife is at present very ill, which goes very near me: and having said this, I know we shall have your prayers. I entreat you to give my humble service to my lord of Bedford, and my lord of Cavendish and his lady. I could upon several accounts be melancholy, but I will not upon so joyful an occasion. I pray God to preserve and bless your ladyship, and all the good family at Woborne, and to make us all concerned to prepare ourselves with the greatest care for a better life. I am, with all true respect and esteem, madam, your ladyship's most faithful and most humble servant.

LETTER LXXII.

Archbishop Tillotson to Lady Russel.

Lambeth-house, October 13th, 1693.

I HAVE forborne, madam, hitherto, even to acknowledge the receipt of your ladyship's letter, and your kind concernment for mine and my wife's health, because I saw how unmerciful you were to your eyes in your last letter to me: so that I should certainly have repented the provocation I gave you to it by mine, had not so great and good an occasion made it necessary.

I had intended this morning to have sent Mr. Vernon to Woborne, to have inquired of your ladyship's health, having but newly heard, that since your return from Belyoir, a dangerous fever had seized upon you. But yesterday morning, at council, I happily met with Mr. Russel, who, to my great joy, told me that he hoped that danger was over; for which I thank God with all my heart, because I did not know how fatal the event might be, after the care and hurry you had been in, and in so sickly a season.

The king's return is now only hindered by contrary winds. I pray God to send him safe to us, and to direct him

what to do when he is come. I was never so much at my wit's end concerning the public. God only can bring us out of the labyrinth we are in, and I trust he will.

My wife gives her most humble service and thanks to you for your concernment for her, and does rejoice equally with me for the good news of your recovery.

Never since I knew the world had I so much reason to value my friends. In the condition I now am I can have no new ones, or, if I could, I can have no assurance that they are so. I could not at a distance believe that the upper end of the world was so hollow as I find it. I except a very few, of whom I can believe no ill till I plainly see it.

I have ever earnestly coveted your letters; but now I do as earnestly beg of you to spare them for my sake, as well as your own. With my very humble service to my good lord of Bedford, and to all yours, and my hearty prayers to God for you all, I remain, madam, your ladyship's most obliged and obedient servant*.

LETTER LXXIII.

The Bishop of Salisbury to Lady Russel.

Salisbury, 31st October, 1696.

I DO heartily congratulate with your ladyship for this new blessing. God has now heard your prayers with relation to two of your children, which is a good earnest that he will hear them in due time with relation to the third. You begin to see your children's children, God grant you may likewise see peace upon Israel. And now that God hath so built up your house, I hope you will set

* The archbishop's correspondence with lady Russel had been interrupted on her part for many months, by the disorder in her eyes increasing to such a degree, that she was obliged, on the 27th of June, 1694, to submit to the operation of couching. Upon this occasion his grace drew up a prayer two days after, in which he touched upon the death of her husband, "whom the holy and righteous Providence," says he, "permitted [under a colour of law and justice] to be [unjustly] cut off from the land of the living." But over the words between the brackets, after the first writing, he drew a line, as intending to erase them, probably from a reflection that they might be too strong, or less suitable to a prayer. June 28th he wrote to the bishop of Salisbury, "I cannot forbear to tell you, that my lady Russel's eye was couched yesterday morning with very good success; God be praised for it."

yourself to build a house of prayer for the honour of his name.

You have passed through very different scenes of life. God has reserved the best to the last. I do make it a standing part of my poor prayers twice a day, that as now your family is the greatest in its three branches that has been in England in our age, so that it may in every one of these answer those blessings by an exemplary holiness, and that both you and they may be public blessings to the age and nation.

I do not think of coming up yet this fortnight, if I am not called for*. I humbly thank your ladyship for giving me this early notice of so great a blessing to you. I hope it shall soon be completed by my lady Ross's full recovery. Mrs. Burnet is very sensible of the honour your ladyship does her in thinking of her, and does particularly rejoice in God's goodness to you. I am, with the highest sense of gratitude and respect possible, madam, your ladyship's most humble, most obedient, and most obliged servant.

LETTER LXXIV.

Lady Russel to King William.

Sir,

I RATHER choose to trouble your majesty with a letter, than be wanting in my duty, in the most submissive manner imaginable, to acknowledge the honour and favour I am told your majesty designs for lord Rutland and his family, in which I am so much interested.

It is an act of great goodness, sir, in you; and the generous manner you have

been pleased to promise it in, makes the honour, if possible, greater. As you will lay an eternal obligation on that family, be pleased to allow me to answer for all those I am related to; they will look on themselves equally honoured with lord Rutland, by your favour to his family, and I am sure will express their acknowledgments to your majesty in the most dutiful manner, to the best of their services; in which I earnestly desire my son Bedford may exceed, as he has been first and early honoured with the marks of your favour. And I hope I may live to see your majesty has bestowed one more upon him, who appears to me to have no other ambition, except what he prefers above all others, making himself acceptable to your majesty, and living in your good opinion.

I presume to say, I believe there is no fault in his intentions of duty towards your majesty, nor I trust ever will be: and that as his years increase, his performances will better declare the faithfulness of his mind, which will hugely enlarge the comforts of your majesty's most humble, most dutiful, and most obedient servant.

N. B. *Lady Russel's indorsement on the foregoing letter is in these words:*

To the King, 1701-2, about first of March, and found in his pocket when dead.

LETTER LXXV.

Lady Russel to (Rouviigny) Earl of Galway†.

June, 1711.

ALAS! my dear lord Galway, my thoughts are all yet disorder, confusion, and amazement; and I think I am very incapable of saying or doing what I should.

I did not know the greatness of my

† Lady Russel's only son Wriothsley, duke of Bedford, died of the small-pox in May, 1711, in the 31st year of his age, upon which occasion this letter was written. To this affliction succeeded, in November, 1711, the loss of her daughter the duchess of Rutland, who died in childbed. Lady Russel, after seeing her in the coffin, went to her other daughter, married to the duke of Devonshire, from whom it was necessary to conceal her grief, she being at that time in childbed likewise; therefore she assumed a cheerful air, and with astonishing resolution, agreeable to truth, answered her anxious daughter's inquiries with these words; "I have seen your sister out of bed to-day."

* The marquis of Halifax said of bishop Burnet, "He makes many enemies, by setting an ill natured example of living, which they are not inclined to follow. His indifference for preferment, his contempt not only of splendour, but of all unnecessary plenty, his degrading himself into the lowest and most painful duties of his calling, are such unpretentious qualities, that let him be never so orthodox in other things, in these he must be a Dissenter. Virtues of such a stamp are so many heresies in the opinion of those divines who have softened the primitive injunctions, so as to make them suit better with the present frailty of mankind. No wonder then if they are angry, since it is in their own defence; or that, from a principle of self-preservation, they should endeavour to suppress a man whose parts are a shame, and whose life is a scandal to them." Both he and Tillotson, as well as many other Christian bishops, were adverse to pluralities and non-residence.

love to his person till I could see it no more. When nature, who will be mistress, has in some measure with time relieved herself, then, and not till then, I trust the Goodness which hath no bounds, and whose power is irresistible, will assist me by his grace to rest contented with what his unerring providence has appointed and permitted. And I shall feel ease in this contemplation, that there was nothing uncomfortable in his death, but the losing him. His God was, I verily believe, ever in his thoughts. Towards his last hours he called upon him, and complained he could not pray his prayers. To what I answered, he said, he wished for more time to make up his accounts with God. Then, with remembrance to his sisters, and telling me how good and kind his wife had been to him, and that he should have been glad to have expressed himself to her, said something to me and my double kindness to his wife, and so died away. There seemed no reluctance to leave this world, patient and easy the whole time, and I believe knew his danger, but, loth to grieve those by him, delayed what he might have said. But why all this? The decree is past. I do not ask your prayers, I know you offer them with sincerity to our Almighty God for your afflicted kinswoman.

LETTER LXXVI.

From Lord Shaftesbury to ———.*

Feb. 24th, 1706-7.

I ACCEPT kindly the offer of your correspondence, and chiefly as it comes from you with heartiness and (the best of characters) simplicity. When this disposition of heart attends our searches into learning and philosophy, we need not fear being "vainly puffed up," or falling into that false way of wisdom, which the Scripture calls "vain philosophy." When the improvement of our minds, and the advancement of our reason, is all we aim at; and this only to fit us for a perfecter, more rational, and worthier service of God; we can have no scruples whether or no the work be an acceptable one to him. But where neither our duty

to mankind, nor obedience to our Creator, is any way the end or object of our studies or exercises, be they ever so curious or exquisite, they may be justly styled "vain;" and often the vainer, for carrying with them the false show of excellence and superiority.

On this account, though there be no part of learning more advantageous even towards divinity than logics, metaphysics, and what we call university-learning; yet nothing proves more dangerous to young minds unforewarned, or, what is worse, prepossessed with the excellency of such learning: as if all wisdom lay in the solution of those riddles of the school-men, who in the last ages of the church, found out an excellent way to destroy religion by philosophy, and render reason and philosophy ridiculous, under that garb they had put on it. If your circumstances or condition suffer you to enter into the world by a university, well is it for you that you have prevented such prepossession.

However, I am not sorry that I lent you Mr. Locke's Essay of Human Understanding, which may as well qualify for business and the world, as for the sciences and a university. No one has done more towards the recalling of philosophy from barbarity, into use and practice of the world, and into the company of the better and politer sort; who might well be ashamed of it in its other dress. No one has opened a better or clearer way to reasoning. And above all, I wonder to hear him censured so much by any Church-of-England men, for advancing reason and bringing the use of it so much into religion; when it is by this only that we fight against the enthusiasts, and repel the great enemies of our church. It is by this weapon alone that we combat those visionaries, who in the last age broke in so foully upon us, and are now (pretendedly at least) esteemed so terrible and dangerous.

But though I am one of those who, in these truly happy times, esteem our church as wholly out of danger: yet should we hearken to those men who disclaim this use of reason in religion, we must lay ourselves open afresh to all fanatics. For what else is fanaticism? Where does the stress of their cause lie? Are not their unintelligible motions of the spirit; their unexpressible pretended feelings, apprehensions, and lights

* These letters were written before the Characteristics, which were first published 1711.

within ; their inspirations in prophecy, extempore prayer, preaching, &c. ; are not these, I say, the foundations on which they build their cause ? Are not our cold dead reasonings (as they call them) a reproach and stumbling-block to them ? if you will believe their leaders, who are instantly cut off from all their pretences to gifts and spirits, and supernatural graces, if they are once brought to the test of cool reason and deliberate examination. And can we thus give up our cause, by giving up reason ? Shall we give them up our Tillotsons, our Barrows, our Chillingworths, our Hammonds ? For what less is it to give up this way of reason so much decried by those condemners of Mr. Locke ? But such is the spirit of some men in controversial matters. A certain noted clergyman of learning and ability, and great reputed zeal, a great enemy of Master Locke, has (I am lately told) turned rigid Calvinist, as to all the points of predestination, free-grace, &c. ; and not only this clergyman, but several more in the university of that high party, who ran as high in opposition to Calvinism but one reign or two since. The reason of this is but too obvious. Our bishops and dignified churchmen (the most worthily and justly dignified of any in any age) are, as they ever were, inclinable to moderation in the high Calvinistic points. But they are also inclinable to moderation in other points.

Hinc illæ lachrymæ.

They are for toleration, inviolable toleration (as our queen nobly and Christianly said it, in her speech a year or two since) ; and this is itself intolerable with our high gentlemen, who despise the gentleness of their Lord and Master, and the sweet mild government of our queen, preferring rather that abominable blasphemous representative of church power, attended with the worst of temporal governments, as we see it in perfection of each kind in France. From this, and from its abettors of every kind, and in every way, I pray God deliver us, whilst we are daily thankful for what in his providence he has already done towards it, and to the happiness and glory of our excellent queen and country. So farewell. I am your good friend to serve you.

LETTER LXXVII.

From Lord Shaftesbury to ———.

May 10th, 1707.

SINCE your disposition inclines you so strongly towards university-learning ; and your sound exercise of your reason, and the integrity of your heart, give good assurance against the narrow principles and contagious manner of those corrupted places, whence all noble and free principles ought rather to be propagated ; I shall not be wanting to you on my part, when I shall see the fruit of your studies, life, and conversation, answerable to those good seeds of principles you seem to carry in you.

I am glad to find your love of reason and free-thought. Your piety and virtue, I know, you will always keep ; especially since your desires and natural inclinations are towards so serious a station in life, which others undertake too slightly, and without examining their hearts.

Pray God direct you, and confirm your good beginnings, and in the practice of virtue and religion ; assuring yourself that the highest principle, which is the love of God, is best attained, not by dark speculations and monkish philosophy, but by moral practice, and love of mankind, and a study of their interests : the chief of which, and that which only raises them above the degree of brutes, is freedom of reason in the learned world, and good government and liberty in the civil world. Tyranny in one is ever accompanied, or soon followed, by tyranny in the other. And when slavery is brought upon a people, they are soon reduced to that base and brutal state, both in their understandings and morals.

True zeal therefore for God or religion, must be supported by real love for mankind : and love of mankind cannot consist but with a right knowledge of man's great interests, and of the only ways and means (that of liberty and freedom) which God and nature has made necessary and essential to his manly dignity and character. They therefore who betray these principles, and the rights of mankind, betray religion even so as to make it an instrument against itself.

But I must have done, and am your good friend to serve you.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

November 19th, 1707.

TRULY if your heart correspond entirely with your pen, and if you thoroughly feel those good principles you have expressed, I cannot but have a great increase of kindness and esteem for you.

Imagine not that I suspect you of so mean a thing as hypocrisy or affected virtue: I am fully satisfied you mean and intend what you write. But, alas! the misfortune of youth, and not of youth merely, but of human nature, is such, that it is a thousand times easier to frame the highest ideas of virtue and goodness, than to practise the least part. And perhaps this is one of the chief reasons why virtue is so ill practised; because the impressions, which seem so strong at first, are too far relied on. We are apt to think, that what appears so fair, and strikes us so forcibly, at the first view, will surely hold with us. We launch forth into speculation; and after a time, when we look back and see how slowly practice comes up to it, we are the sooner led to despondency the higher we had carried our views before.

Remember therefore to restrain yourself within due bounds; and to adapt your contemplation to what you are capable of practising. For there is a sort of spiritual ambition; and in reading those truly divine authors whom you have sometimes cited to me, I have observed many to have miscarried by too fervent and eager a pursuit of such perfection.

Glad I am, however, that you are not one of those dull souls that are incapable of any spiritual refinement. I rejoice to see you raise yourself above the rank of sordid and sensual spirits, who, though set apart and destined to spirituals, understand not that there is any thing preparatory to it, beyond a little scholarship and knowledge of forms. I rejoice to see that you think of other preparations, and another discipline of the heart and mind, than what is thought of amongst that indolent and supine race of men.

You are sensible, I perceive, that there is another sort of study, a profounder meditation, which becomes those who are to set an example to mankind, and

fit themselves to expound and teach those short and summary precepts and divine laws, delivered to us in positive commands by our sacred Legislator.

It is our business, and of all, as many as are raised in knowledge above the poor, illiterate, and laborious vulgar, to explain as far as possible the reasons of those laws; their consent with the law of nature; their suitableness to society, and to the peace, happiness, and enjoyment of ourselves. It is there alone that we have need of recourse to fire and brimstone, and what other punishments the Divine Goodness (for our good) has condescended to threaten us with, where the force of these arguments cannot prevail.

Our business within ourselves is to set ourselves free according to that perfect law of liberty, which we are bid to look into. And I am delighted to read these words from you, *viz.* that we are made to contemplate and love God entirely, and with a free and voluntary love. But this you will see is a mystery too deep for those souls whom you converse with, and see around you. They have scarce heard of what it is to combat with their appetites and senses. They think themselves sufficiently justified as men, and sufficiently qualified as holy men, and teachers of religion, if they can compass matters by help of circumstances and outward fortune, so as happily to restrain these lusts and appetites of theirs within the bounds of ordinary human laws. Hence those allurements of external objects (as you well remark) they are so far from declining, that they rather raise and advance them by all possible means, without fear of adding fuel to their inflamed desires, in a heart which can never burn towards God till those other fires are extinct.

God grant that since you know this better way, this chaste and holy discipline, you may still pursue it with that just and pious jealousy over your own heart, that neither your eyes, nor any of your senses, may be led away to serve themselves, or any thing but that Creator who made them for his service, and in whom alone is happiness and rest.

I wish you well, and shall be glad to hear still of you.

LETTER LXXIX.

From Lord Shaftesbury to ———.

April 2d, 1708.

I HAVE received yours every week, and am highly satisfied with your thoughts; not doubting but they are truly your own and natural, as well as your manner of expressing them; for in this I would have you keep an entire freedom, and deliver your sentiments still nakedly, and without art or ornament. For it is the heart I look for: and though the ornaments of style are what you are obliged to study and practise on other occasions, the less you regard them, and the greater simplicity you discover in writing privately to myself, the greater my satisfaction is, and the more becoming the part you have to act.

I was particularly pleased with your thoughts and reasonings on Christian liberty, and the zeal you shew for that noble principle, by which we cease to be slaves and drudges in religion; and by being reconciled to our duty, and to the excellence of those precepts and injunctions, which tend absolutely to our good and happiness in every respect, we become liberal servants and children of God.

A mind thus released and set at liberty, if it once sees its real good, will hardly be deprived of it, or disheartened in the pursuit, whatever discouragement surrounds it. It is the inward enemy alone can stop it. For when a mind, set free from voluntary error and self-darkening conceit, aspires to what is generous and deserving, nothing but what is vile and slavish from within can deaden it; nothing but a base love of inward slavery, and an adherence to our vices and corruptions, is able to effect this.

In some, who are horridly degenerate, this submission is wholly voluntary. Self-interest leads them, whether it be a private one of their own, or in society and confederacy with some faction or party, to the support of temporal ends. In this case it carries a specious shew of public good; whether it be in church or state. And thus it is often the occasion of an open denial of reason, and of a barefaced opposition to the glorious search of truth.

In others, it is mere sloth and laziness,

or sordid appetite and lust, which, bringing them under the power of sin and ignorance, fits them for political servitude by moral prostitution. For when the tyranny of lust and passion can be indulgently permitted, and even esteemed a happiness, no wonder if liberty of thought be in little esteem. Every thing civil or spiritual of this kind must needs be disregarded, or rather looked upon with jealousy and apprehension.

For one tyranny supports another: one slavery helps and ministers to another. Vice ministers to superstition; and a gainful mistress she is: superstition on the other hand returns the kindness, and will not be ungrateful. Superstition supports persecution, and persecution superstition.

Vice and intemperance is but an inward persecution. It is here the violence begins. Here the truth is first held in unrighteousness, and the *γνῶσις*, "reason knowable, the intelligible, the divine part," is persecuted and imprisoned. Those who submit to this tyranny, in time not only come to it, but plead for it, and think the law of virtue tyrannical and against nature.

So in the absolute governments of the world: nations, that submit to arbitrary rule, love even their form of government: if one may call that a form which is without any, and, like vice itself, knows neither law nor order.

In this state the mind helps forward the ill work. For when reason, as an antagonist to vice, is become an inward enemy, and has once lost her interest with the soul by opposing every favourite passion, she will then be soon expelled another province, and lie under suspicion for every attempt she makes upon the mind. She is presently mis-called and abused. She is thought notional in the understanding, whimsical in company, seditious in the state, heretical in the church. Even in philosophy, her own proper dominion, she is looked upon as none of the best of companions; and here also authority is respected as the most convenient guide.

This we find to be the temper of certain places; where wit and sense, however, are not wanting, nor learning of a certain kind. So that what is at the bottom of all this is easily seen by those who see those places, and can but make

use of their eyes to observe manners and morals.

It is pretty visible indeed that the original of all is in those sordid vices of sloth, laziness, and intemperance. This makes way for ambition; for how should these be so illustriously maintained and vindicated, without large temporal power, and the umbrage of authority? Hence it is that those mother-vices are so indulgently treated in those places, and that temperance and virtue are looked upon with an evil eye, as fanatically inclined. For who that is morally free, and has asserted his inward liberty, can see truth thus held, reason and ingenuity suppressed, without some secret abhorrence and detestation?

But this you are happily apprized of; nor can you miscarry or be turned aside by imposture, or assuming formality and pride of any kind. You know your liberty: use it and be free. But use it as becomes you, with all due meekness and submission as to outward carriage. It is the inward man that is to be relieved and rescued from his chains. Others need not your admonition; nor is this your duty, but far contrary. Preserve yourself from the contagion, and it is enough: a great task it is, and will appear so to you, if you are hearty in it, and concerned for the thing itself, not the appearance. For the inclination towards rebuke and rectifying of others, which feels like zeal in us, is often the deceit of pride and self-conceit, which finds this way to screen itself and manage undiscovered.

Keep your virtue and honesty to yourself; for if it be truly such, it will be in no pain for being kept secret. And thus you may be safe, and in due time, perhaps, useful also to others. Learn to discourse and reason with yourself, or, as you honestly do, in letters to me. Trouble not others; nor be provoked to shew your sentiments, and betray noble and generous truths to such as can neither bear them, nor those whom they suspect to be in possession of them.

Mind that which is the chief of all, liberty; and subdue early your own temper and appetites. It will then be time for higher speculations, when those wandering imaginations, vain conceits, and wanton thoughts of youth, are mortified and subdued. Religion then

will have no enemy opposed to her; and in spite of superstition, and all spiritual tyrannies of the world, will soon be found a joyful task, the pleasantest of all lives, quite other than is commonly represented.

Look chiefly to this practice; for this is always permitted you; this you can be employed in every hour, even when books and privacy are denied you, and business and attendance required. The more you are a servant in this sense, the more you will partake of that chief liberty which is learnt by obedience and submission. And thus even they who perhaps, by their haughtiness and harshness, would render you a slave, and awe you into servile thoughts, will most of all contribute to your manumission; if by their sad example they teach you (in meekness still and humility) to detest the more their narrow, persecuting, and bitter spirit, supported by their vices, and shew you evidently that great truth, that "tyranny can never be exercised but by one who is already a slave."

Be assured, therefore, that where the heart disdains this original corruption, the mind will be its friend: and by delivering it from all spiritual bondage, will qualify it for a further progress, rewarding virtue by itself. For of virtue there can be no reward but of the same kind with itself; nothing can be super-added to it: and even heaven itself can be no other than the addition of grace to grace, virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge; by which we may still more and more comprehend the chief virtue, and highest excellence, the Giver and Dispenser of all: to whom I commit you, and pray your studies may be effectual. So farewell.

LETTER LXXX.

From the same to ———.

January 28th, 1708-9.

I WAS that morning thinking with myself what was become of you; and almost resolved to have you inquired of at your father's; when I received your very surprising letter, which brought so good an account of yourself, and a proof how well you had spent your time, during this your long silence.

It was providential, surely, that I

should happen once to speak to you of the Greek language, when you asked concerning the foundations of learning, and the source and fountain of those lights we have, whether in morality or divinity. It was not possible for me to answer you deceitfully or slightly. I could not but point out to you where the spring-head lay. But, as well as I can remember, I had you not be discouraged; for by other channels, derived from those fountains, you would be sufficiently supplied with the knowledge necessary for the solemn character that lay before you.

You hearkened to me, it seems, with great attention and belief, and did resolve to take no middle way. But little could I have thought that you dared to have made your attempt on the other side, instead of drawing in your forces, and collecting your strength and the remainder of your precious time for what lay on this hither side. But since God would have it so, so be it: and I pray God prosper you in your daring attempt, and bless you with true modesty and simplicity in all the other endeavours and practices of your life, as you have had courage and mighty boldness in this one.

And so indeed it may naturally happen by the same good providence; since at the instant that you began this enterprise, you have fallen into such excellent reading. And if, as you shew by your letter, Simplicius's Comment be your delight, even that alone is a sufficient earnest of your soul's improvement as well as of your mind's, if such a distinction may well be made: for alas! all that we call improvement of our minds in dry and empty speculation, all learning or whatever else, either in theology or other science, which has not a direct tendency to render us honester, milder, juster, and better, is far from being justly so called. And even all that philosophy which is built on the comparison and compounding of ideas, complex, implex, reflex, and all that din and noise of metaphysics; all that pretended study and science of nature called natural philosophy, Aristotelian, Cartesian, or whatever else it be; all those high contemplations of stars, and spheres, and planets; and all the other inquisitive curious parts of learning, are so far from being necessary improve-

ments of the mind, that without the utmost care they serve only to blow it up in conceit and folly, and render men more stiff in their ignorance and vices.

And this brings into my thoughts a small piece of true learning, which I think is generally bound up with Simplicius and Epictetus: it is the Table (or Picture) of Cebes the Socratic, and elder disciple of Plato. This golden piece I would have you study, and have by heart; the Greek too being pure and excellent: and by this picture you will better understand my hint, and know the true learning from that which falsely passes under the name of wisdom and science.

As for the divine Plato, I would not wish you, as yet, to go beyond a dialogue or two; and let those be the first and second Alcibiades: for now I will direct and assist you all I can, that you may gradually proceed, and not meet with stumbling-blocks in your way, or what instead of forwarding may retard you.

Read these pieces again and again. Suspend for a while the reading of Epictetus, and read of Marcus Antoninus only what you perfectly understand. Look into no commentator; though he has two very learned ones, Gataker and Casaubon: and by no means study or so much as think on any of the passages that create any difficulty or hesitation: but, as I tell you, keep to the plain and easy passages, which you may mark or write out, and so use on occasion, as you walk or go about. For I reckon you are a good improver of your time, and that you manage every moment to advantage; else you could never have thus suddenly advanced so far as you have done.

But, in this case, you must take care of your health, by moving and using exercise, which makes me speak of walking. For the mind must suffer, in some sense, when the body does. And students who are over-eager, and neglect this duty, hurt both their health and temper: the latter of which has a sad influence on their minds; and makes them, like ill vessels, sour whatever is put into them, though of ever so good a kind. For never do we more need a just cheerfulness, good humour, or alacrity of mind, than when we are con-

templating God and virtue. So that it may be assigned as one cause of the austerity and harshness of some men's divinity, that in their habit of mind, and by that very morose and sour temper, which they contract with their hard studies, they make the idea of God so much after the pattern of their own bitter spirit.

But, as I was saying concerning your progress, it is better for you to read in a small compass what is good and excellent, and of easy conception (without stop or difficulty, as to the speculation), than to read much in many.

And having thus confined you, as to three of your authors mentioned, and set your bounds; I proceed to the fourth, which is Lucian; with whom, for a very different reason, I would have you also read but here and there. For though he is one of the politest writers of the latter age; he only has set himself out like the jay in the fable, with the spoils of those excellent and divine works by way of dialogue (which was the way that anciently all the philosophers wrote in); most of which works are now lost and perished: and I fear the true reason why Lucian was preserved, instead of any of the other, was because of the envy of the Christian church, which soon began to be so corrupt; and finding this author to be so truly profane, and a scoffer of his own and all religions, they were contented to bear his immorality and dissolute style and manners, only for the satisfaction of seeing the heathen religion ridiculed by a heathen, and the good and pious writers (unjustly styled profane) most monstrously abused by a wretch, who was truly the most profane and impious: and who, at the same time, even in the pieces that are left of him in the same book, treats both Moses and our Saviour, and the whole Christian religion, as contemptibly as he does his own. Therefore, as his dialogues of his courtizans are horridly vicious and licentious, and against all good manners; and as his dialogues of the gods are mere buffoonery, and his abuse of Plato, Socrates, and the rest of those divine heathens, as unjust and wicked, as really they are mean and ridiculous, I would not by any means have you to learn Greek at such a cost. There are some dialogues bound up, which

are not of Lucian's: and these are the best. One concerning the cynics (whom he elsewhere so abuses) is of that number, as I take it: and some pleasant treatises there are besides, all in pure Greek.

But here is the great and essential matter, of the last consequence to our souls and minds, to keep them from the contagion of pleasure. And to shew you that I am not by this an imitator of the severe ascetic monastic race of divines, or an admirer of any thing that looks like restraint in knowledge, or learning, or speculation; consider of this that I am going to say to you, and carry your reflection as far back as to that first little glimmering of ingenuity, which shewed itself in you in your childhood; I mean the art of painting. Had you been to have made one of those artists of the nobler kind, who paint history, and actions, and nature; and had you been sent by me into Italy, or elsewhere, to learn the style and manner of the great masters; what advice, think you, should I have given you? I say, what advice? not as a Christian, or philosopher, or man of virtue; but merely as a lover of the art: supposing I had ever been of a very vicious life; and had had no other end in sending you abroad, than to have procured pictures, and have got you a masterly hand in that kind, and to have employed you afterwards for my own use, and for the ornament of my house: most certainly my advice must have been this (and thus any other master or patron of common sense would have accosted you):

"You are now going to learn what is excellent and beautiful in the way of painting. You will go where there are many pictures of many different hands, and quite contrary in their manner and style. You will find many judges of different opinions; and the worst masters, the worst pieces, the worst styles and manners, will have their admirers. How is it you should form your relish? By what means shall you come to have a right admiration yourself, and praise and imitate only what is truly exquisite and good in the kind? If you follow your sudden fancy and bent; if you fix your eye on that which most strikes and pleases you at the first sight; you will most certainly never come to have a good eye at all. You will be led aside,

and have a florid, gay, foolish fancy; and any lewd tawdry piece of dawbing will make a stronger impression on you, than the most majestic chaste piece of the soberest master; and a Flemish or a French manner will more prevail with you than a true Italian.

“How shall we do then in this case? —Why even thus: (for what way is there else?) make it a solemn rule to yourself, to check your own eye and fancy, which naturally leads to gaiety, and turn it strongly on that which it cares not at first to dwell upon. Be sure that you pass by, on every occasion, whatever little idle piece of a negligent loose kind may be apt to detain your eye; and fix yourself upon the nobler, more masterly, and studied pieces of such as were known virtuosos, and admired by all such. If you find no grace or charm at the first looking, look on; continue to observe all that you possibly can; and when you have got one glimpse, improve it, copy it, cultivate the idea, and labour till you have worked yourself into a right taste, and formed a relish and understanding of what is truly beautiful in the kind.”

This is what an ordinary master or patron of common good sense would have said to you upon your enterprise on painting: and this is what I now say to you on your great enterprise on knowledge and learning. This is the reason I cry out to you against pleasure; to beware of those paths which lead to a wrong knowledge, a wrong judgment of what is supremely beautiful and good.

Your endeavour and hope is to know God and goodness, in which alone there is true enjoyment and good. The way to this is not to put out your eyes, or hoodwink yourself, or lie in the dark, expecting to see visions. No, you need not apologize for yourself (as you do) for desiring to read Origen, the good Father, and best of all those they call so. You shall not only, by my consent, read Origen, but even Celsus himself, who was a heathen and writ zealously against the Christians, whom Origen defends: so far am I from bidding you fly heretical or heathen books, where good manners, honesty, and fair reason shew themselves. But where vice, ill manners, abusive wit, and buffoonery appear, the prejudice is just; pronounce against

such authors, fly them, and condemn them.

Preserve yourself, and keep your eye and judgment clear. But if the eye be not open to all fair and handsome spectacles, how should you learn what is fair and handsome? You would praise God: But how would you praise him? and for what? Know you, as yet, what true excellence is? The attributes, as you call them, which you have learnt in your catechism, or in the higher schools of the school-men and divines; —the attributes, I say, of justice, goodness, wisdom, and the like, are they really understood by you? or do you talk of these by rote? If so; what is this but giving words to God, not praise, nor honour, nor glory? If the Apostle appeals to whatsoever is lovely, whatsoever is honest (or comely), whatsoever is virtue, or praise-worthiness; how shall we understand his appeal till we have studied? Or do we know these things from our cradles? For since we were men, we never vouchsafed to inquire; but took for granted that we were knowing in the matter; which yet, without philosophy, it is impossible we should be; so that when, without philosophy, we make use of these high terms, and praise God in these philosophical characters, we may be very good and pious, and well-meaning; but indeed we are little better than parrots in devotion.

To return therefore to the picture, and the advice I am to give you in your study of that great and masterly hand which has drawn all things, and exhibited this great master-piece of nature, this world or universe. The first thing is, that you prepare and clear your sight; that your eye be simple, pure, uncorrupted, and ready and fit to receive that light which is to shine into it. This is done by virtue, meekness, modesty, sincerity. And way being thus made, your resolution standing towards truth, and you being conscious to yourself, that whilst you seek truth you cannot offend the God of truth; be not afraid of viewing all and comparing all. For without comparison of the false with the true, of the ugly with the beautiful, of the dark and obscure with the bright and shining, we can measure nothing, nor apprehend any thing that is excellent. We may be as well pagan, heathen, Turk, or any thing else; if being at Constantinople, Ispahan,

or wherever the seat of any great empire is we refuse to look on Christian authors, or hear their sober apologists, as being contrary to the history imposed on us, with an utter destruction and cancelling of all other history or philosophy whatsoever.

But this fear being set aside, which is so wholly unworthy of God, and so debasing to his standard of reason which he has placed in us; our next concern is, to look impartially into all authors, and upon all nations, and into all parts of learning and human life; to seek and find out the true *pulchrum*, the *honestum*, the *καλόν*: by which standard and measure we may know God; and know how to praise him, when we have learnt what is praiseworthy.

Be this your search, and by these means, and by this way I have shewn you. Seek for the *καλόν* in every thing, beginning as low as the plants, the fields, or even the common arts of mankind, to see what is beautiful, and what contrary. Thus, and by the original fountains you are arrived to, you will, under Providence, attain beauty and true wisdom for yourself, being true to virtue; and so God prosper you.

LETTER LXXXI.

Lord Shaftesbury to ———.

February 8, 1709.

I COMMEND your honest liberty: and therefore in the use of it recommend to you the pursuit of the same thoughts, that you have so honestly and naturally grafted upon the stock afforded you: to which God grant a true life and increase.

Time will be, when your greatest disturbance will arise from that ancient difficulty *πότεν τὸ καλόν*. But when you have well inured yourself to the precepts and speculation which give the view of its noble contrary (*τὸ καλόν*), you will rest satisfied. But be persuaded, in the mean time, that wisdom is more from the heart, than from the head. Feel goodness, and you will see all things fair and good.

Let it be your chief endeavour to make acquaintance with what is good: that by seeing perfectly, by the help of reason, what good is, and what ill, you may prove whether that which is from reve-

lation be not perfectly good and conformable to this standard. For, if so, the very end of the Gospel proves its truth. And that which to the vulgar is only knowable by miracles, and teachable by positive precepts and commands, to the wise and virtuous is demonstrable by the nature of the thing. So that how can we forbear to give our assent to those doctrines, and that revelation, which is delivered to us, and enforced by miracles and wonders? But to us, the very test and proof of the divineness and truth of that revelation is from the excellence of the things revealed: otherwise the wonders themselves would have little effect or power; nor could they be thoroughly depended on, were we even as near to them as those who lived more than a thousand years since, when they were freshly wrought, and strong in the memory of men. This is what alone can justify our easiness of faith; and in this respect we can never be too resigned, too willing, or too complaisant.

Meanwhile let your eye be simple, and turn it from the *ἀθεόν* to the *θεόν*. View God in goodness, and in his works, which have that character. Dwell with honesty, and beauty, and order: study and love what is of this kind; and in time you will know and love the Author. Farewell.

LETTER LXXXII.

From the same to the same.

May 5, 1709.

I AM mightily satisfied with your writing to me as you do: pray continue.

I like your judgment and thoughts on the books you mention: the bishop of Salisbury's Exposition of the Articles is, no doubt, highly worthy of your study. None can better explain the sense of the church, than one who is the greatest pillar of it since the first founders; one who best explained and asserted the Reformation itself, was chiefly instrumental in saving it from popery before and at the Revolution, and is now the truest example of laborious, primitive, pious, and learned episcopacy. The antidote, indeed, recommended to you, was very absurd, as you remark yourself; and pray have little to do with controversy of any sort.

Chillingworth against Popery is sufficient reading for you, and will teach you the best manner of that polemic divinity. It is enough to read what is good; and what you find bad lay aside. The good you read will be a sufficient prevention and anticipation against any evil that may chance come across you imperceptibly. Fill yourself with good; and you will carry within you sufficient answer to the bad; and by a sort of instinct soon discern the one from the other.

Trust your own heart whilst you keep it honest, and can lift it up to the God of truth, as seeking that, and that only. But keep yourself from wrangling, and a controversial spirit; for more harm is taken by a fierce, sour answer to an ill book, than from the book itself, be it ever so ill. Therefore remember, I charge you to avoid controversial writers.

If the ancients in their purity are as yet out of your reach, search the moderns that are nearest to them. If you cannot converse with the most ancient, use the most modern. For the authors of the middle age, and all that sort of philosophy, as well as divinity, will be of little advantage to you. Gain the purity of the English, your own tongue; and read whatever is esteemed polite or well writ that comes abroad. You may give me an account of this.

Meanwhile I am glad you read those modern divines of our nation who lived in this age, and were remarkable for moderation, and the Christian principle of charity and toleration.

Do as your genius directs you; and if you are virtuous and good, your genius will guide you right. But whatever it be, either ancient or modern, that you choose or read; or however you change your opinion or course of study; communicate, and you shall be heard willingly, and advised the best I am able.

I think your genius has dictated right to you about a little pamphlet, which, it seems, is commonly sold with the reflections lately writ upon it; which, if short, I would not for once debar you from, but have you hear what is said in answer, lest you should seem to yourself mistaken or diffident as to the truth. For my own part, I cannot but think from my heart, that the author of the pamphlet (whatever air of humour he may give himself, the better to take with the polite world) is most sincere to vir-

tue and religion, and even to the interest of our church. For many of our modern asserters of toleration have seemed to leave us destitute of what he calls a public leading, or ministry; which notion he treats as mere enthusiasm, or horrid irreligion. For, in truth, religion cannot be left thus to shift for itself, without the care and countenance of the magistrate. But in the remarks, or reflections, I find the answerers are so far from understanding this plain sense of a leading, that they think it means only a leading by the nose. So excellent are these gentlemen at improving ridicule against themselves. They care not who defends religion, or how it is defended, if it be not in their way. They cry out upon a deluge of scepticism breaking out and overwhelming us, in this witty knowing age; and yet they will allow no remedy proper in the case, no application to the world in a more genteel, polite, open, and free way. They for their parts (witness Dr. A——y against the good Mr. H——y) have asserted virtue upon baser principles, and more false and destructive by far, than Epicurus, Democritus, Aristippus, or any of the ancient atheists. They have subverted all morality, all grounds of honesty, and supplanted the whole doctrine of our Saviour, under pretence of magnifying his revelation. In philosophy they give up all foundations, all principles of society, and the very best arguments to prove the being of a Deity. And, by the way, this pamphlet, which they are so offended at, is so strong on this head, that the author asserts the Deity even on the foundations of his innate idea, and the power of this notion even over atheists themselves, and by the very concession of Epicurus and that sect. But no more now. Continue to inform me of your reading and of new books: and God be with you.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Lord Shaftesbury to ———.

December 30, 1709.

I HEARTILY approved your method and design, and continue to do so. Get what you can of the Greek language: it is the fountain of all; not only of polite learning and philosophy, but of divinity also,

as being the language of our sacred oracles. For even the Old Testament is in its best and truest language in the Septuagint. All that you can get of leisure from other exercise and the required school-learning, apply to Greek.

The few good books of our divines and moralists, which you have discovered by your own sagacity, will serve you both for language and thought.

Dr. More's *Enchiridion Ethicum* is a right good piece of sound morals; though the doctor himself, in other English pieces, could not abide by it, but made different excursions into other regions, and was perhaps as great an enthusiast as any of those whom he wrote against. However, he was a learned and a good man.

Remember my former cautions and recommendations, and endeavour above all things to avoid the conceit and pride which is almost naturally inherent to the function and calling you are about to undertake. And since we think fit to call it priesthood, see that it be of such a kind, as may not make you say or think of yourself in the presence of another, that you are holier than he. It is a solemn part; but see and beware that the solemnity do not abuse you. And remember, that He, whom you own to be your master and legislator, made no laws relating to civil power or interfering with it. So that all the pre-eminence, wealth, or pension, which you receive, or expect to receive, by help of this assumed character, is from the public, whence both the authority and profit is derived, and on which it legally depends; all other pretensions of priests being Jewish and heathenish, and in our state seditious, disloyal, and factious; such as is that spirit which now reigns in our universities, and where the high-church-men (as they are called) are prevalent. But to this (thank God) our parliament, interposing at this instant, gives a check, by proceeding against Dr. S——l, and advancing Mr. H——y, of whom I have often spoken to you.

No more now; but God bless your studies and endeavours. Never was more need of a spirit of moderation and Christianity among those who are entering on the ministerial function: since the contrary spirit has possessed almost the whole priesthood beyond all former fanatics. God send you all true Chris-

tianity, with that temper, life, and manners, which become it. Farewell.

LETTER LXXXIV.

From the same to the same.

July 10, 1710.

I BELIEVED indeed it was your expecting me every day at ****, that prevented your writing, since you received orders from the good bishop, my lord of Salisbury; who, as he had done more than any man living for the good and honour of the church of England and the reformed religion, so he now suffers more than any man from the tongues and slander of those ungrateful churchmen; who may well call themselves by that single term of distinction, having no claim to that of Christianity or Protestant, since they have thrown off all the temper of the former, and all concern or interest with the latter.

I hope whatever advice the great and good bishop gave you will sink deeply into your mind: and that your receiving orders from the hands of so worthy a prelate will be one of the circumstances which may help to insure your steadiness, in honesty, good principles, moderation, and true Christianity; which are now set at naught and at defiance by the far greater part and numbers of that body of clergy called the Church of England; who no more esteem themselves a Protestant church, or in union with those of Protestant communion; though they pretend to the name of Christian, and would have us judge of the spirit of Christianity from theirs: which God prevent! lest good men should in time forsake Christianity through their means.

As for my part of kindness and friendship to you, I shall be sufficiently recompensed, if you prove (as you have ever promised) a virtuous, pious, sober, and studious man, as becomes the solemn charge belonging to you. But you have been brought into the world, and come into orders, in the worst times for insolence, riot, pride, and presumption of clergymen that I ever knew, or have read of; though I have searched far into the characters of high churchmen from the first centuries, in which they grew, to be dignified with crowns and purple,

to the late times of our reformation, and to our present age.

The thorough knowledge you have had of me, and the direction of all my studies and life to the promotion of religion, virtue, and the good of mankind, will (I hope) be of some good example to you; at least it will be a hinderance to your being seduced by infamies and calumnies; such as are thrown upon the men called moderate, and in their style indifferent in religion, heterodox, and heretical.

I pray God to bless you in your new function with all the true virtue, humility, moderation, and meekness, which becomes it. I am your hearty friend.

LETTER LXXXV.

Lord Shaftesbury to Robert Molesworth, Esq.

Chelsea, Sept. 30, 1708.

Dear sir,

Two reasons have made me delay answering yours; I was in hopes of seeing our great lord, and I depended on Mr. Micklethwayt's presenting you with my services, and informing you of all matters public and private. The queen is but just come to Kensington, and my lord* to town. He promised to send me word, and appoint me a time, when he came. But I should have prevented him, had it been my weather for town visits. But having owed the recovery of my health to the method I have taken of avoiding the town smoke, I am kept at a distance, and like to be removed even from hence in a little while: though I have a project of staying longer here than my usual time, by removing now and then cross the water, to my friend sir John Cropley's in Surrey, where my riding and airing recruits me. I am highly rejoiced, as you may believe, that I can find myself able to do a little more public service, than what of late years I have been confined to, in my country: and I own the circumstances of a court were never so inviting to me, as they have been since a late view I have had of the best part of our ministry. It may perhaps have added

more of confidence and forwardness in my way of courtship, to be so incapacitated as I am from taking any thing there for myself. But I hope I may convince some persons, that it is possible to serve disinterestedly; and that obligations already received (though on the account of others) are able to bind as strongly as the ties of self-interest.

I had resolved to stay till I had one conference more with our lord† before I writ to you: but a letter, which I have this moment received from Mr. Micklethwayt, on his having waited on you in the country, has made me resolve to write thus hastily (without missing to-night's post) to acknowledge, in the friendliest and freest manner, the kind and friendly part you have taken in my private interests. If I have ever endured any thing for the public, or sacrificed any of my youth, or pleasures, or interests to it, I find it is made up to me in the good opinion of some few: and perhaps one such friendship as yours may counterbalance all the malice of my worst enemies. It is true, what I once told you I had determined with myself, never to think of the continuance of a family, or altering the condition of life that was most agreeable to me, whilst I had (as I thought) a just excuse: but that of late I had yielded to my friends, and allowed them to dispose of me, if they thought that by this means I could add any thing to the power or interest I had to serve them or my country. I was afraid, however, that I should be so heavy and unactive in this affair, that my friends would hardly take me to be in earnest. But though it be so lately that I have taken my resolution, and that you were one of the first who knew it, I have on a sudden such an affair thrown across me, that I am confident I have zeal enough raised in me to hinder you from doubting whether I sincerely intend what I profess. There is a lady whom chance has thrown into my neighbourhood, and whom I never saw till the Sunday before last, who is in every respect that very person I had ever framed a picture of from my imagination, when I wished the best for my own happiness in such a circumstance. I had heard her character before; and her education, and every circumstance beside, suited exactly, all

* The earl of Godolphin, then lord treasurer.

† Earl of Godolphin.

but her fortune. Had she but a ten thousand pounds, my modesty would allow me to apply without reserve, where it was proper. And I would it were in my power, without injury to the lady, to have her upon those terms, or lower. I flatter myself too, by all appearance, that the father has long had and yet retains some regard for me; and that the disappointments he has had in some higher friendships may make him look as low as on me, and imagine me not wholly unworthy of his relation. But, if by any interest I had, or could possibly make with the father, I should induce him to bestow his daughter, perhaps with much less fortune (since I would gladly accept her so) than what in other places he would have bestowed, I shall draw a double misfortune on the lady; unless she has goodness enough to think, that one who seeks her for what he counts better than a fortune, may possibly by his worth or virtue make her sufficient amends. And were I but encouraged to hope or fancy this, I would begin my offers to-morrow; and should have greater hopes, that my disinterestedness would be of some service to me in this place, as matters stand.

You see my scruple; and being used to me, and knowing my odd temper (for I well know you believe it no affectation), you may be able to relieve me, and have the means in your hands: for a few words with one, who has the honour to be your relation, would resolve me in this affair. I cannot stir in it till then, and should be more afraid of my good fortune than my bad, if it should happen to me to prevail with a father for whom the lady has so true a duty, that, even against her inclination, she would comply with any thing he required. I am afraid it will be impossible for you to read, or make sense of, what I write thus hastily: but I fancy with myself, I make you the greater confidence, in trusting to my humour and first thought, without staying till I have so much as formed a reflection. I am sure there is hardly any one besides you, I should lay myself thus open to; but I am secure in your friendship, which I rely on (for advice) in this affair. I beg to hear from you in answer by the first post, being, with great sincerity, your faithful friend and humble servant.

LETTER LXXXVI

From the same to the same.

Beachworth, in Surrey, Oct. 12, 1708.

Dear sir,

FROM the hour I had writ you that hasty letter from Chelsea I was in pain till I had heard from you; and could not but often wish I had not writ in that hurry and confusion. But since I have received yours in answer, I have all the satisfaction imaginable. I see so sincere a return of friendship, that it cannot any more concern me to have laid myself so open.

I would have a friend see me at the worst; and it is a satisfaction to find, that if one's failures or weaknesses were greater than really they are, one should still be cherished, and be supplied even with good sentiments and discretion, when they were wanting. One thing only I beg you would take notice of, that I had never any thoughts of applying to the young lady before I applied to the father. My morals are rather too strict to let me have taken such an advantage, had it been ever so fairly offered. But my drift was, to learn whether there had been an inclination to any one before me; for many offers had been, and some I know very great, within these few months. And though the duty of the daughter might have acquiesced in the dislike of the father, so as not to shew any discontent; yet there might be something of this lying at the heart, and so strongly, that my application and success (if I had any) might be looked on with an ill eye, and cause a real trouble. This would have caused it, I am sure, in me; when I should have come, perhaps too late, to have discovered it. But there is nothing of this in the case, by all that I can judge or learn. Never did I hear of a creature so perfectly resigned to duty, so innocent in herself, and so contented under those means which have kept and still keep her so innocent as to the vanities and vices of the world; though with real good parts, and improvement of them at home; for of this my lord has wisely and handsomely taken care. Never was any thing so unfortunate for me, as that she should be such a fortune; for that I know is what every body will like, and I perhaps have the worst relish of, and least deserve. The

other qualities I should prize more than any, and the generality of mankind, instead of prizing would be apt to condemn; for want of air and humour, and the wit of general conversation, and the knowledge of the town, and fashions, and diversions, are unpardonable dullnesses in young wives; who are taken more as companions of pleasure, and to be shewn abroad as beauties in the world, than to raise families, and support the honour and interest of those they are joined to.

But to shew you that I am not wanting to myself, since your encouraging and advising letter, I have begun my application, by what you well call the right end*. You shall hear with what success, as soon as I know myself. I could both be bolder and abler in the management of the affair, and could promise myself sure success, had I but a constitution that would let me act for myself, and bustle in and about that town which, by this winter season coming on so fiercely, is by this time in such a cloud of smoke, that I can neither be in it nor near it. I stayed but a day or two too long at Chelsea, after the setting in of these east and north-east winds, and I had like to have fallen into one of my short-breathing fits, which would have ruined me. But by flying hither and keeping my distance, I keep my health, but (I may well fear) shall lose my mistress. For who ever courted at this rate? Did matters lie so as to the fortune, that I could be the obliging side, it might go on with tolerable grace; and so I fear it must be, whenever I marry, or else am likely to remain a bachelor.

However, you can never any more arraign my morals after this. You can never charge me, as you have done, for a remissness and laziness, or an indulgence to my own ways, and love of retirement; which (as you thought) might have me made averse to undertake the part of wife and children, though my country or friends ever so much required it of me. You see it will not be my fault; and you shall find I will not act booty for myself. If I have any kind of success at this right end, I will then beg to use the favour of your interest in your cousin, as I shall then mention to you;

but instead of setting me off for other things, I would most earnestly beg that you would speak only of your long and thorough knowledge of me, and (if you think it true) of my good temper, honesty, love of my relations and country, sobriety and virtue. For these I hope I may stand to as far as I am possessed of them. They will not, I hope, grow worse as I grow older. For though I can promise little of my regimen, by which I hold my health; I am persuaded to think no vices will grow upon me, as I manage myself; for in this I have been ever sincere, to make myself as good as I was able, and to live for no other end.

I am ashamed to have writ such a long letter about myself, as if I had no concern for the public; though I may truly say to you, if I had not the public in view, I should hardly have these thoughts of changing my condition at this time of day, that I can better indulge myself in the ease of a single and private life. The weather, which is so unfortunate for me by these settled east winds, keeps the country dry; and if they are the same (as is likely) in Flanders, I hope ere this Lisle is ours, which has cost us so dear, and held us in such terrible anxiety.

I have been to see lord treasurer that little while he was in town, but could not find him.

Pray let me hear in your next, what time you think of coming up*. I shall be glad to hear soon from you again. Wishing you delight and good success in your country affairs, and all happiness and prosperity to your family, I remain, dear sir, your obliged friend and faithful humble servant.

Sir John Cropley, with whom I am here, presents his humble service to you.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Lord Shaftesbury to Robert Molesworth, Esq.

Beachworth, in Surrey, Oct. 23, 1708.

Dear sir,

You guessed right as to the winds, which are still easterly, and keep me here in winter-quarters, from all public

* The father.

* From Edlington, a seat the lord Molesworth had in Yorkshire.

and private affairs. I have neither seen lord treasurer, nor been at Chelsea* to prosecute my own affair; though as for this latter, as great as my zeal is, I am forced to a stand. I was beforehand told, that as to the lord, he was in some measure engaged; and the return I had from him, on my application, seemed to imply as much. On the other side I have had reason to hope, that the lady, who had before bemoaned herself for being destined to greatness without virtue, had yet her choice to make; and, after her escapes, sought for nothing so much as sobriety and a strict virtuous character. How much more still this adds to my zeal you may believe; and by all hands I have received the highest character of your relation, who seems to have inspired her with these and other good sentiments, so rare in her sex and degree. My misfortune is, I have no friend in the world by whom I can in the least engage, or have access to your relation, but only by yourself; and I have no hopes of seeing you soon, or of your having any opportunity to speak of me to her. If a letter could be proper, I should fancy it more so at this time than any other; provided you would found it on the common report which is abroad, of my being in treaty for that lady. This might give you an occasion of speaking of me as to that part which few besides can know so well—I mean my heart; which, if she be such as really all people allow, will not displease her to hear so well of, as perhaps in friendship and from old acquaintance you may represent. If the person talked of be really my rival, and in favour with the father, I must own my case is next to desperate; not only because I truly think him, as the world goes, likely enough to make a good (at least a civil) husband; but because as my aim is not fortune, and his is, he being an old friend too, I should unwillingly stand between him and an estate; which his liberality has hitherto hindered him from gaining, as great as his advantages have been hitherto in the government. By what I have said, I believe you may guess who my supposed rival is†; or if you want a farther hint, it is one of the chief of the

Junto, an old friend of yours and mine, whom we long sat with in the House of Commons (not often voted with), but who was afterwards taken up to a higher house; and is as much noted for wit and gallantry, and magnificence, as for his eloquence and courtier's character. But whether this be so suited to this meek good lady's happiness, I know not. Fear of partiality and self-love makes me not dare determine, but rather mistrust myself, and turn the balance against me. Pray keep this secret, for I got it by chance; and if there be any thing in it, it is a great secret between the two lords themselves. But sometimes I fancy it is a nail which will hardly go, though I am pretty certain it has been aimed at by this old acquaintance of ours, ever since a disappointment happened from a great lord beyond sea, who was to have had the lady.

Nothing but the sincere friendship you shew for me could make me to continue thus to impart my privatest affairs: and in reality, though they seem wholly private and selfish, I will not be ashamed to own the honesty of my heart to you; in professing that the public has much the greatest part in all this bustle I am engaging in. You have lately made me believe, and even proved too by experience, that I had some interest in the world; and there, where I least dreamt of it, with great men in power. I had always something of an interest in my country, and with the plain honest people: and sometimes I have experienced both here, at home, and abroad, where I have long lived, and made acquaintance (in Holland especially), that with a plain character of honesty and disinterestedness, I have on some occasions, and in dangerous urgent times of the public, been able to do some good. If the increase of my fortune be the least motive in this affair before me (as sincerely I do not find), I will venture to say, it can only be in respect of the increase of my interest, which I may have in my country in order to serve it.

One who has little notion of magnificence, and less of pleasure and luxury, has not that need of riches which others have. And one who prefers tranquillity, and a little study, and a few friends, to all other advantages of life, and all the flatteries of ambition and fame, is not like to be naturally so very fond of engaging

* He had a pretty retreat at Little Chelsea, which he fitted up according to his own fancy.

† Charles Montague, late earl of Halifax.

in the circumstances of marriage : I do not go swimmingly to it, I assure you ; nor is the great fortune a great bait. Sorry I am, that nobody with a less fortune, or more daughters, has had the wit to order such an education. A very moderate fortune had served my turn ; or perhaps quality alone, to have a little justified me, and kept me in countenance had I chose so humbly. But now that which is rich ore, and would have been the most estimable had it been bestowed on me, will be mere dross, and flung away on others, who will pity and despise those very advantages which I prize so much. But this is one of the common-places of exclamation, against the distribution of things in this world ; and, upon my word, whoever brought up the proverb, it is no advantageous one for a Providence to say, " Matches are made in heaven." I believe rather in favour of Providence, that there is nothing which is so merely fortune, and more committed to the power of blind chance. So I must be contented, and repine the less at my lot, if I am disappointed in such an affair. If I satisfy my friends that I am not wanting to myself, it is sufficient. I am sure you know it, by the sound experience of all this trouble I have given and am still like to give you. Though I confess myself, yet even in this too I do but answer friendship, as being so sincerely and affectionately your most faithful friend and humble servant.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Lord Shaftesbury to R. Molesworth, Esq.

Beachworth, Nov. 4, 1708.

Dear sir,

I was at Chelsea when I received yours with the enclosed, and was so busied in the employment you had given me, by your encouragement and kind assistance in a certain affair, that I have let pass two posts without returning you thanks, for the greatest marks of your friendship that any one can possibly receive. Indeed I might well be ashamed to receive them in one sense, since the character you have given of me* is so far beyond what I dare think suitable ; though in these

* This relates to a letter the lord Molesworth had written in his favour.

cases, one may better perhaps give way to vanity than in any other. But though friendship has made you over favourable, there is one truth, however, which your letter plainly carries with it, and must do me service. It shews that I have a real and passionate friend in you ; and to have deserved such a friendship, must be believed some sort of merit. I do not say this as aiming at a fine speech, but in reality, where one sees so little friendship and of so short continuance, as commonly in mankind it must be, one would think, even in the sex's eye, a pledge of constancy, fidelity, and other merit, to have been able to engage and preserve so lasting and firm a friendship with a man of worth. So that you see, I can find a way to reconcile myself to all you have said in favour of me, allowing it to have been spoken in passion ; and in this respect the more engaging with the sex ; who are as good or better judges than we ourselves of the sincerity of affection.

But in the midst of my courtship came an east wind, and with the town smoke did my business, or at least would have done it effectually, had I not fled hither with what breath I had left. Indeed I could have almost laughed at my own misfortune ; there is something so odd in my fortune and constitution. You may think me melancholy if you will. I own there was a time in public affairs when I really was ; for, saving yourself, and perhaps one or two more (I speak the most), I had none that acted with me, against the injustice and corruption of both parties ; each of them inflamed against me, particularly one, because of my birth and principles ; the other, because of my pretended apostasy, which was only adhering to those principles on which their party was founded. There have been apostates indeed since that time. But the days are long since past that you and I were treated as Jacobites†. What to say for some companions of ours, as they are now changed‡, I know not :

† The truly apostate Whigs, who became servile and arbitrary to please court empires, branded all those as Jacobites who adhered to those very principles that occasioned and justified the revolution.

‡ Here he means some who voted with him in his favourite bills, and who were originally Whigs ; but out of pique and disappointment, became, if not real Jacobites (which was scarce possible), yet in effect as bad, by pro-

but as to my own particular, I assure you, that since those sad days of the public, which might have helped on perhaps with that melancholy or spleen which you fear in me, and for certain have helped me to this ill state of health; I am now, however, as free as possible; and even in respect of my health too, excepting only the air of London, I am, humanly speaking, very passable; but gallantly speaking, and as a courtier of the fair sex, God knows I may be very far from passing. And I have that sort of stubbornness and wilfulness (if that be spleen) that I cannot bear to set a better face on the matter than it deserves; so I am like to be an ill courtier, for the same reason that I am an ill jockey. It is impossible for me to conceal my horse's imperfections or my own, where I mean to dispose of either. I think it unfair; so that could any quack, by a peculiar medicine, set me up for a month or two, enough to go through with my courtship, I would not accept his offer, unless I could miraculously be made whole. Now for a country health and a town neighbourhood, I am sound and well; but for a town life, whether it be for business or diversion, is out of my compass.

I say all this, that you may know my true state, and how desperate a man you serve, and in how desperate a case. Should any thing come of it, the friendship will appear the greater; or if nothing, the friendship will appear the same still, as to me myself. Your letter was delivered; I hope you will hear soon in answer to it. The old lord continues wonderfully kind to me, and I hear has lately spoken of me so to others. Our public affairs at home will be much changed by the late death of the prince*. But I have been able to see nobody; so will not attempt to write, and will end here with the assurance of my being, dear sir, your most obliged and faithful friend and servant.

LETTER LXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

St. Giles's, March 7, 1708-9.

Dear sir,

I SHOULD indeed have been concerned noting all the designs peculiar to that desperate party.

* The prince of Denmark.

very much at your silence, had I not known of your health by your friends and mine, with whom you lately dined. I feared your constitution would suffer by this extremity of weather we have had. The town smoke, I think, is no addition to this evil in your respect; but with me it would have been destruction. The happiness of a most healthy and warm, as well as pleasant situation where I am, and which I may really praise beyond any I have known in England, has preserved me in better health this winter than I could have imagined. And I design to profit of the stock I have laid up, and come soon where I may have the happiness of conversing with you. But now you have led me into the talk of friendship, and have so kindly expostulated with me about my thanks, let me in my turn expostulate too about your excuses for your letters, or even for your omission. I well know you would not forget me, were there any thing that friendship required. For the rest, friendship requires that we should be easy, and make each other so. It is an injustice to a real friend to deny one's self the being lazy, when one has a mind to it. I have professed to you, that I take that liberty myself, and would use it if there were occasion. But besides other inequalities that are between us, over and above those you reckoned up, consider that, together with my full leisure and retreat here in the country (by which means I have choice of hours to write when I fancy), I have also a secret and private interest that pushes me forward to be writing to you as often and as much as I can. I am ashamed things should stand so unequally between us; for you have not yet had a fair trial, what a correspondent I should prove upon equal terms, nor can I impute a single letter of mine to mere friendship. But I am more ashamed still, when I, who should make excuses, am forced to receive them. See if you are not over-generous! for any one besides yourself would be apt to use a little raillery with a man in my circumstances, that had such an affair depending, and wholly in your hands. But I find you have too much gallantry, as well as friendship, to take the least advantage of a lover; and are willing to place more to the account of friendship than I can suffer without blushing. However, be se-

cure of this, that when you take intentions instead of facts, you can never impute more to me in the way of friendship than I really deserve. And if I have not yet had the occasion of proving myself as I would do to you in this respect, I am satisfied, if the occasion offered, you would not find me remiss: in the mean time, pray use me with more indulgence, and shew me that you can use me as a friend, by writing only when you have a fancy, and no more than you have a fancy for. You cannot imagine what a favour I should take it to receive a shorter and a worse letter from you, than you would write perhaps to any friend you had in the world besides. It is a law I set myself with my near and intimate friends to write in every humour, or neglect writing, as I fancy; and from this settled negligence I grow a right correspondent, and write when I scarce think of it, by making thus free with those I write to: if you will take my humour as it runs, you shall have hearty thanks too into the bargain, for taking it off at this rate. Let me but have a small scrap or scrawl (three or four sizes below the first of your letters, after the late conference), and I shall think myself not only favourably, but kindly and friendly dealt with.

Nardi parvus onyx eliciet cadum.

Hor. Lib. 4. Od. 12. ver. 17.

The truth is, I long for another such precious scrap as I had after your first attempt for me; that if you are as successful in a second, and find that your good advice has made impression, and that there be a real foundation of hope, I may come up quickly to make my second attempt upon my old friend.

Your story of friendship could not but delight me, it being one of my darling pieces*; especially being in an author, who, though he perpetually does all he can to turn all morality and virtue into ridicule, is yet forced to pay this, and one or two more remarkable tributes of acknowledgment, to the principle of society and friendship, which is the real principle of life, the end of life, and

not (as some philosophers would have it) the means. Horace in his wild days was of another opinion; but when he came in a ripper age to state the question,

Quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumve, trahat nos?
Hor. Lib. 2. Sat. 6. ver. 75.

he always gives it for the latter, and would not allow virtue to be a mere name. Let who will despise friendship, or deny a social principle, they will, if they are any thing ingenuous, be urged one time or another to confess the power of it; and if they enjoy it not themselves, will admire or envy it in others. And when they have inverted the whole matter of life, and made friendships, and acquaintances, and alliances serve only as a means to the great and sole end of interest, they will find, by certain tokens, within their own breasts, that they are short of their true and real interests of life, for this is in reality,

Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

Your judgment, too, of the first of the parts in the story of friendship, is in my opinion perfectly just. My natural ambition in friendship made me wish to be the poor man rather of the two, though since I have lately had to deal with a rich one, I have wished often to change parts; and keeping the wealth I have, would fain have my old friend to be heartily poor, and accordingly make an experiment of me by such a legacy. But I am afraid he hardly thinks me capable of accepting of it; or if he did, I know not whether he would think the more favourably of me. Mine is a hard case indeed, when I am on one side obliged to act so disinterested a part; and yet must be careful on the other side, lest, for not loving money, I should be thought an ill son-in-law, and unfit to be intrusted with any thing. Thus you see I mix love and philosophy, and so I should politics and public affairs with private, if my place at this time was not the country and yours the town. However, I cannot forbear entreating you to send me word whether the proposal about Dunkirk† was from our friend in the ministry or not, for I heard he disliked it, or seemed

* This story, which is well worth perusing, is in Lucian's *Toxaris*, or discourse of friendship.

† The demolishing of its fortifications and ruining of its harbour, which was first proposed in the unaccomplished treaties of the Hague and Gertruydenburgh, 1703.

to do so ; and for the last there may be good reason, as he is a statesman ; for the former, I can see none, but am rather inclined to think, that as a generous and true statesman, he had for many reasons (in respect of foreign and home affairs) contrived that the proposal should seem to have its rise from a popular heat, rather than from the cabinet council, and as a deliberate thought. But if my own thought of it be fond, it is in the way of friendship still ; for I could wish a friend the happiness of being author of every public good that was possible for him, and not to be a hinderance or obstruction to any.

To conclude, one word about my private affair, and I have done for this time. I beg you, when you have been your visits, and made your utmost effort to see what foundation I may hope for, you would write me a line instantly. For though I have private affairs of some consequence, that should keep me here at least a month or six weeks longer, I will despise all of that kind ; and now the roads are passable and weather tolerable, will come up at a week's warning ; if a man, who loves and admires, is known though never seen, can possibly be favoured or thought to deserve. For if so, the cause is nobler, and there is a better foundation for acting boldly. Adieu, adieu.

LETTER XC.

Lord Shaftesbury to R. Molesworth, Esq.

Beachworth, Sept. 3, 1708.

Dear sir,

IT is now long since I had fixed my thoughts on nothing but the happiness of seeing you, and profiting of those advantages which the perfectest friendship, with the greatest address, and indefatigable pains, had compassed in, my behalf. There was nothing I might not have hoped from such a foundation as you had laid ; and all the enchantments in the world could not have held proof, had my sad fate allowed me but to have followed my guide, and executed what my general had so ably designed. But not a star, but has been my enemy. I had hardly got over the unnatural winter, but with all the zeal imaginable I dispatched my affairs and came up from the west, thinking to surprise you by a visit. The hurry

I came away in, and the fatigue of more than ordinary business I was forced to dispatch that very morning I set out, joined with the ill weather which returned again upon my journey, threw me into one of my ill fits of the asthma, and almost killed me on the road. After a few weeks I got this over, and my hopes revived ; and last week I went to Chelsea, paid my visit next day to the old man, found him not at home, resolved to redouble my visits, and once more endeavour to move him. But the winds returned to their old quarter, I had London smoke on me for a day or two, grew extremely ill with it, and was forced to retire hither, where I have but just recovered breath.

What shall I do in such a case ? To trouble you further I am ashamed : ashamed too that I should have pushed such an affair to which my strength was so little suitable ; and yet ashamed to desist, after what I have done, and the vast trouble I have put you to. But fortune has at length taught me that lesson of philosophy, "to know myself," my constitution I mean ; for my mind (in this respect at least) I know full well. And I wish in all other things I could be as unerring and perfect as I have been in this affair, in which I am certain no ambition, or thought of interest, has had any part ; though it may look as if all my aim had been fortune, and not the person and character of the lady, as I have pretended. But in this I dare almost say with assurance, you know my heart. Whether the lady does, or ever will, God knows ; for I have scarce the heart left to tell it her, had I the opportunity.

So much for my sad fortune.

I hope however to be at Chelsea again in a few days, and I long for the happiness of seeing you there ; for I have no hopes of being able to wait on you at your lodgings.

If the queen goes soon to Windsor, I hope soon to see the great man, our friend, whom I can easier visit there than at St. James's. He has been so kind to inquire after me with particular favour, and has sent me a kind message in relation to public affairs. I am, dear sir, your most obliged friend and faithful humble servant.

LETTER XCI.

Lord Shaftesbury to R. Molesworth, Esq.

Chelsea, June 15, 1709.

My dear friend,

I WAS this day to wait again on my old lord. I found him as civil and obliging as ever. But when I came to make mention of my affair, I found the subject was uneasy to him. I did but take occasion, when he spoke in praise of my little house and study, to tell him I built it in a different view from what his lordship knew me to have of late; for I had then (I told him) no thoughts beyond a single life. I would have added, that since I was unhappy in my first offer, and had turned my thoughts as I had lately done, when I flattered myself in the hopes of his favour, I could no longer enjoy the place of his neighbourhood with the satisfaction I had done before. But I found he was deaf on this ear. He seemed to express all the uneasiness that could be, and I could go no further. I see there is no hope left for me. If he thought any one sincere, I believe I might be as likely as any one to be trusted by him. But I am afraid he thinks but the worse of me for pretending to value his daughter as I do, and for protesting that I would be glad to take her without a farthing, present or future, and yet settle all I have, as I have offered him. He will not easily find such a friend and son-in-law; one that has such a regard for him and his.

But so it must be. He may suffer perhaps as well as I. There is no help for this, when men are too crafty to see plain, and too interested to see their real friends and interest. I shall soon shew my sincerity in one respect, if I live; for since I cannot have the woman I have seen and liked, I may determine perhaps on one I have never seen; and take a lady for a character only without a fortune (which I want not), since you and other friends are so kindly importunate and pressing on this concern of mine.

But of this more when I see you next, with a thousand acknowledgments and thanks for the thorough friendship you have shewn; and what is so truly friendship, that I almost think I injure it when I speak of thanks and acknowledgments.

You will have me take all of this kind

in another manner; and therefore, on the same foot, I expect you should take all that I have done, or ever can do, without ceremony, and as your faithful friend and humble servant.

LETTER XCII.

From the same to the same.

Beachworth, July 9, 1709.

My dear friend,

I CAN hardly be reconciled to you, for saying so much as you have done, to express your concern for the disappointment of my grand affair. I am not so ill a friend, nor have lived so little in the world, as not to know by experience, that a disappointment in a friend's concern is often of more trouble to one than in one's own. And I was so satisfied this was your case, that I was willing to diminish the loss, and make as slight of it as possible, the better to comfort you, and prevent your being too much concerned at what had happened. As to the fortune, I might sincerely have done it; but as to the lady, I own the loss is great enough: for, besides her character and education, she was the first I turned my thoughts upon after the promise you had drawn from me the year before, when you joined with some friends of mine in kindly pressing me to think of the continuance of a family. Methinks now I might be acquitted, after this attempt I have made. But you have taken occasion from the ill success of it to prove how much more still you are my friend, in desiring to make the most of me while I live, and keep what you can of me for memory sake afterwards. This is the kindest part in the world; and I cannot bring myself so much as to suppose a possibility of your flattering me. I have an easy faith in friendship. My friends may dispose of me as they please, when they thus lay claim to me; and whilst they find me of any use to them, or think I have any power still to serve mankind or my country in such a sphere as is yet left for me, I can live as happy in a crazy state of health, and out of the way of pleasures and diversions, as if I enjoyed them in the highest degree. If marriage can be suitable to such a circumstance of life, I am content to engage. I must do my

best to render it agreeable to those I engage with; and my choice, I am sensible, ought for this reason to be as you have wisely prescribed for me. I must resolve to sacrifice other advantages, to obtain what is principal and essential in my case.

What other people will say of such a match, I know not; nor what motive they will assign for it, when interest is set aside. Love, I fear, will be scarce a tolerable pretence in such a one as I am: and for a family, I have a brother still alive, whom I may still have some hopes of. What a weakness then would it be thought in me, to marry with little or no fortune, and not in the highest degree of quality neither! Will it be enough that I take a breeder out of a good family, with a right education, fit for a mere wife; and with no advantage but simple innocence, modesty, and the plain qualities of a good mother and a good nurse? This is as little the modern relish as that old-fashioned wife of Horace's,

*Sabina qualis, aut perusta solibus
Pernicis uxor Appuli.*

Epod. ii. ver. 41.

Can you, or my friends, who press me to this, bear me out in it? See, if with all the notions of virtue (which you, more than any one, have helped to propagate in this age) it be possible to make such an affair pass tolerable in the world! The experiment however shall be made, if I live out this summer; and you shall hear me say, as the old bachelor in the Latin Menander, with a little alteration,

*Etsi hoc molestum,—atque alienum a vita mea
Videtur; si vos tantopere istuc vultis, fiat.*

Terent. Adelph. Act v. sc. viii. ver. 21.

You see upon what foot of friendship I treat you. Judge whether it be necessary for you hereafter to say much in order to convince me what a friend you are; and for my own part, I have reduced you, I am confident, to the necessity of believing me either the most insincere of all men, or the most faithfully your friend and humble servant.

I missed our great friend, when I was last to visit him at St. James's. I intend for Windsor very soon, if I am able.

LETTER XCIII.

From the same to the same.

Ryegate in Surrey, Nov. 1, 1709.

Dear sir,

If I have had any real joy in any new state, it was then chiefly when I received yours that wished it me. The two or three friends whom, besides yourself, I pretend to call by that name, were so much parties to the affair, and so near me, that their part of congratulation was in a manner anticipated. Happily you were at a good distance and *point de vue* to see right; for as little trust as I allow to the common friendship of the world, I am so presumptuous in this case of a near and intimate friend, that instead of mistrusting their affection, I am rather afraid of its rendering them too partial. The interest and part which I believe them ready to take in my concern, makes me wish them sometimes to see me (as they should do themselves) from a distance, and in a less favourable light. So that, although I have had godfathers to my match, I have not been confirmed till I had your approbation; and though (thank God) I have had faith to believe myself a good Christian without episcopal confirmation, I should have thought myself an ill husband, and but half married, if I had not received your concluding sentence and friendly blessing. In good earnest (for to you I am not ashamed to say it) I have for many years known no other pleasure, or interest, or satisfaction, in doing any thing, but as I thought it right, and what became me to my friends and country. Not that I think I had the less pleasure for this reason; but honesty will always be thought a melancholy thing to those who go but half way into the reason of it, and are honest by chance or by force of nature, not by reason or conviction. Were I to talk of marriage, and forced to speak my mind plainly, and without the help of humour or raillery, I should doubtless offend the most part of sober married people, and the ladies chiefly; for I should in reality think I did wonders in extolling the happiness of my new state, and the merit of my wife in particular, by saying, that I verily thought myself as happy a man now as ever. And is not that subject enough of joy? What would a man of sense wish more? For my own part,

if I find any sincere joy, it is because I promised myself no other than the satisfaction of my friends, who thought my family worth preserving, and myself worth nursing in an indifferent crazy state, to which a wife (if a real good one) is a great help. Such a one I have found; and if by her help or care I can regain a tolerable share of health, you may be sure it will be employed as you desire, since my marriage itself was but a means to that end.

I have deferred three or four posts the answering yours, in expectation of reporting something to you from our great lord, to whom I had lately sent a letter; he having before let me know that he would soon write to me upon something of moment; but as yet I have heard nothing. Only, as oft as he sees a friend of ours, he inquires after me with a particular kindness. I am now at such a convenient distance from him, whether he be at St. James's, Kensington, or Windsor, that when the weather and wind serve for me, and I am tolerably well, I can in four or five hours' driving be ready to attend him. Other attendance I am not, you know, capable of; nor can I expect such a change of health as that comes to; for sincerely it depends on that alone. As proudly as I have carried myself to other ministers, I could as willingly pass a morning waiting at his *lèvee* as any where else in the world.

When I was last with him at Windsor, you may be sure, I could not omit speaking to him of yourself. The time I had with him was much interrupted by company. I know not how my interest, on such a foot as this, is like to grow; but I am certain it shall not want any cultivating, which an honest man, and in my circumstances, can possibly bestow upon it. If he has, or comes to have, any good opinion of my capacity or knowledge, he must withal regard me in the choice I make of friends. And if it happens, as fortunately it has done, that the chief friend I have, and the first whom I consider in public affairs, was previously his own acquaintance and proved friend, one would think he should afterwards come to set a higher value upon him; and since he cannot have one always near him who gladly would be so, he will oblige another who is willing and able. And in reality, if at this time your coming up depends only on his wish

(as you tell me) and the commands he may have for you, I shall much wonder if he forgets the advantage, or thinks he can dispense with your presence at such a time.

Your character of lord Wharton is very generous. I am glad to hear so well of him. If ever I expected any public good where virtue was wholly sunk, it was in his character; the most mysterious of any in my account, for this reason. But I have seen many proofs of this monstrous compound in him, of the very worst and best. A thousand kind thanks to you, in my own and spouse's name, for your kind thoughts of seeing us. I add only my repeated service and good wishes, as your old and faithful friend, and obliged humble servant.

LETTER XCIV.

*Lord Shaftesbury to Lord ***.*

[*Sent with the Notion of the Historical Draught of the Judgment of Hercules.*]

My lord,

This letter comes to your lordship, accompanied with a small writing intitled *A Notion*: for such alone can that piece deservedly be called, which aspires no higher than to the forming of a project, and that too in so vulgar a science as painting. But whatever the subject be, if it can prove any way entertaining to you, it will sufficiently answer my design. And if possibly it may have that good success, I should have no ordinary opinion of my project, since I know how hard it would be to give your lordship a real entertainment by any thing which was not in some respect worthy and useful.

On this account, I must by way of prevention inform your lordship, that after I had conceived my *Notion*, such as you see it upon paper, I was not contented with this, but fell directly to work, and by the hand of a master-painter brought it into practice, and formed a real design. This was not enough. I resolved afterward to see what effect it would have, when taken out of mere black-and-white into colours; and thus a sketch was afterwards drawn. This pleased so well, that being encouraged by the *virtuosi* who are so eminent in this part of the world, I resolved at last to

engage my painter in the great work. Immediately a cloth was bespoke of a suitable dimension, and the figures taken as big or bigger than the common life; the subject being of the heroic kind, and requiring rather such figures as should appear above ordinary human stature.

Thus my Notion, as light as it may prove in the treatise, is become very substantial in the workmanship. The piece is still in hand, and like to continue so for some time. Otherwise the first draught or design should have accompanied the treatise, as the treatise does this letter. But the design having grown thus into a sketch, and the sketch afterwards into a picture, I thought it fit your lordship should either see the several pieces together, or be troubled only with that which was the best, as undoubtedly the great one must prove, if the master I employ sinks not very much below himself in this performance.

Far surely should I be, my lord, from conceiving any vanity or pride in amusements of such an inferior kind as these, especially were they such as they may naturally at first sight appear. I pretend not here to apologize either for them or for myself. Your lordship, however, knows I have naturally ambition enough to make me desirous of employing myself in business of a higher order: since it has been my fortune in public affairs to act often in concert with you, and in the same views, on the interests of Europe and mankind. There was a time, and that a very early one of my life, when I was not wanting to my country in this respect. But after some years of hearty labour and pains in this kind of workmanship, an unhappy breach in my health drove me not only from the seat of business, but forced me to seek these foreign climates; where, as mild as the winters generally are, I have with much ado lived out this latter one; and am now, as your lordship finds, employing myself in such easy studies as are most suitable to my state of health, and to the genius of the country where I am confined.

This in the mean time I can with some assurance say to your lordship in a kind of spirit of prophecy, from what I have observed of the rising genius of our nation, that if we live to see a peace any way answerable to that generous spirit with which this war was begun and car-

ried on for our own liberty and that of Europe, the figure we are like to make abroad, and the increase of knowledge, industry, and sense at home, will render united Britain the principal seat of arts; and by her politeness and advantages in this kind, will shew evidently how much she owes to those counsels which taught her to exert herself so resolutely in behalf of the common cause, and that of her own liberty and happy constitution necessarily included.

I can myself remember the time when, in respect of music, our reigning taste was in many degrees inferior to the French. The long reign of luxury and pleasure under king Charles the Second, and the foreign helps and studied advantages given to music in a following reign, could not raise our genius the least in this respect. But when the spirit of the nation was grown more free, though engaged at that time in the fiercest war, and with the most doubtful success, we no sooner began to turn ourselves towards music, and inquire what Italy in particular produced, than in an instant we outstripped our neighbours the French, entered into a genius far beyond theirs, and raised ourselves an ear and judgment not inferior to the best now in the world.

In the same manner as to painting. Though we have as yet nothing of our own native growth in this kind worthy of being mentioned, yet since the public has of late begun to express a relish for engravings, drawings, copyings, and for the original paintings of the chief Italian schools (so contrary to the modern French), I doubt not that in very few years we shall make an equal progress in this other science. And when our humour turns us to cultivate these designing arts, our genius, I am persuaded, will naturally carry us over the slighter amusements, and lead us to that higher, more serious, and noble part of imitation which relates to history, human nature, and the chief degree or order of beauty, I mean that of the rational life, distinct from the merely vegetable and sensible, as in animals or plants; according to those several degrees or orders of painting which your lordship will find suggested in this extemporary Notion I have sent you.

As for architecture, it is no wonder if so many noble designs of this kind have miscarried amongst us, since the genius

of our nation has hitherto been so little turned this way, that through several reigns we have patiently seen the noblest public buildings perish (if I may say so) under the hand of one single court-architect; who, if he had been able to profit by experience, would long since, at our expense, have proved the greatest master in the world. But I question whether our patience is like to hold much longer. The devastation so long committed in this kind, has made us begin to grow rude and clamorous at the hearing of a new palace spoiled, or a new design committed to some rash or impotent pretender.

It is the good fate of our nation in this particular, that there remain yet two of the noblest subjects for architecture: our princess' palace and our house of parliament. For I cannot but fancy that when Whitehall is thought of, the neighbouring lords and commons will at the same time be placed in better chambers and apartments than at present; were it only for majesty's sake, and as a magnificence becoming the person of the prince, who here appears in full solemnity. Nor do I fear that when these new subjects are attempted, we should miscarry as grossly as we have done in others before. Our state in this respect may prove perhaps more fortunate than our church, in having waited till a national taste was formed before these edifices were undertaken. But the zeal of the nation could not, it seems, admit so long a delay in their ecclesiastical structures, particularly their metropolitan. And since a zeal of this sort has been newly kindled amongst us, it is like we shall see from afar the many spires arising in our great city, with such hasty and sudden growth, as may be the occasion perhaps that our immediate relish shall be hereafter censured, as retaining much of what artists call the Gothic kind.

Hardly, indeed, as the public now stands, should we bear to see a Whitehall treated like a Hampton Court, or even a new cathedral like St. Paul's. Almost every one now becomes concerned, and interests himself in such public structures. Even those pieces too are brought under the common censure, which, though raised by private men, are of such grandeur and magnificence as to become national ornaments. The ordinary man may build his cottage, or the plain gen-

tleman his country house, according as he fancies; but when a great man builds, he will find little quarter from the public, if, instead of a beautiful pile, he raises at a vast expense such a false and counterfeit piece of magnificence, as can be justly arraigned for its deformity by so many knowing men in art, and by the whole people, who, in such a conjecture, readily follow their opinion.

In reality, the people are no small parties in this cause. Nothing moves successfully without them. There can be no public but where they are included. And without a public voice, knowingly guided and directed, there is nothing which can raise a true ambition in the artist; nothing which can exalt the genius of the workman, or make him emulous of after-fame, and of the approbation of his country and of posterity. For with these, he naturally as a freeman must take part; in these he hath a passionate concern and interest raised in him, by the same genius of liberty, the same laws and government by which his property and the rewards of his pains and industry are secured to him, and to his generation after him.

Every thing co-operates in such a state towards the improvement of art and science. And for the designing arts in particular, such as architecture, painting, and statuary, they are in a manner linked together. The taste of one kind brings necessarily that of the other along with it. When the free spirit of a nation turns itself this way, judgments are formed; cities arise; the public eye and ear improve; a right taste prevails, and in a manner forces its way. Nothing is so improving, nothing so natural, so congenial to the liberal arts, as that reigning liberty and high spirit of a people, which from the habit of judging in the highest matters for themselves, makes them freely judge of other subjects, and enter thoroughly into the characters as well of men and manners, as of the products or works of men in arts and science. So much, my lord, do we owe to the excellence of our national constitution and legal monarchy; happily fitted for us, and which alone could hold together so mighty a people; all share (though at so far a distance from each other) in the government of themselves, and meeting under one head in one vast metropolis, whose enormous

growth, however censurable in other respects, is actually a cause that workmanship and arts of so many kinds arise to such perfection.

What encouragement our higher powers may think fit to give these growing arts, I will not pretend to guess. This I know, that it is so much for their advantage and interest to make themselves the chief parties in the cause, that I wish no court or ministry, besides a truly virtuous and wise one, may ever concern themselves in the affair. For should they do so, they would in reality do more harm than good: since it is not the nature of a court (such as courts generally are) to improve, but rather corrupt a taste. And what is in the beginning set wrong, by their example, is hardly ever afterwards recoverable in the genius of a nation.

Content therefore I am, my lord, that Britain stands in this respect as she now does. Nor can one, methinks, with just reason, regret her having hitherto made no greater advancement in these affairs of art. As her constitution has grown and been established, she has in proportion fitted herself for other improvements. There has been no anticipation in the case. And in this surely she must be esteemed wise as well as happy; that ere she attempted to raise herself any other taste or relish, she secured herself a right one in government. She has now the advantage of beginning in other matters on a new foot. She has her models yet to seek, her scale and standard to form with deliberation and good choice. Able enough she is at present to shift for herself, however abandoned or helpless she has been left by those whom it became to assist her. Hardly, indeed, could she procure a single academy for the training of her youth in exercises. As good soldiers as we are, and as good horses as our climate affords, our princes, rather than expend their treasure this way, have suffered our youth to pass into a foreign nation to learn to ride. As for other academies, such as those for painting, sculpture, or architecture, we have not so much as heard of the proposal: whilst the prince of our rival nation raises academies, breeds youth, and sends rewards and pensions into foreign countries, to advance the interest and credit of his own.

Now if, notwithstanding the industry and pains of this foreign court, and the supine unconcernedness of our own, the national taste however rises, and already shews itself in many respects beyond that of our so highly assisted neighbours; what greater proof can there be of the superiority of genius in one of these nations above the other?

It is but this moment that I chance to read in an article of one of the gazettes from Paris, that it is resolved at court to establish a new academy for political affairs. "In it the present chief minister is to preside; having under him six academists, *douez des talens necessaires*—no person to be received under the age of twenty-five. A thousand livres pension for each scholar—able masters to be appointed for teaching them the necessary sciences, and instructing them in the treaties of peace and alliances, which have been formerly made—the members to assemble three times a week—*c'est de ce seminaire* (says the writer) *qu'on tirera les secretaires d'ambassade; qui par degrez pourront monter a de plus hauts emplois.*"

I must confess, my lord, as great an admirer as I am of these regular institutions, I cannot but look upon an academy for ministers as a very extraordinary establishment; especially in such a monarchy as France, and at such a conjuncture as the present. It looks as if the ministers of that court had discovered lately some new method of negotiation, such as their predecessors Richelieu and Mazarine never thought of; or that, on the contrary, they have found themselves so declined, and at such a loss in the management of this present treaty, as to be forced to take their lessons from some of those ministers with whom they treat; a reproach of which, no doubt, they must be highly sensible.

But it is not my design here to entertain your lordship with any reflections upon politics, or the methods which the French may take to raise themselves new ministers or new generals; who may prove a better match for us than hitherto, whilst we held our old. I will only say to your lordship on this subject of academies, that indeed I have less concern for the deficiency of such a one as this, than of any other which could be thought of for England; and that as for

a seminary of statesmen; I doubt not but, without this extraordinary help, we shall be able, out of our old stock, and the common course of business, constantly to furnish a sufficient number of well-qualified persons to serve upon occasion, either at home or in our foreign treaties, as often as such persons accordingly qualified shall duly, honestly, and *bona fide* be required to serve.

I return therefore to my *virtuoso* science; which being my chief amusement in this place and circumstance, your lordship has by it a fresh instance that I can never employ my thoughts with satisfaction on any subject, without making you a party. For even this very Notion had its rise chiefly from the conversation of a certain day which I had the happiness to pass a few years since in the country with your lordship. It was there you shewed me some engravings which had been sent you from Italy. One in particular I well remember; of which the subject was the very same with that of my written Notion enclosed. But by what hand it was done, or after what master, or how executed, I have quite forgot. It was the summer season, when you had recess from business. And I have accordingly calculated this epistle and project for the same recess and leisure. For by the time this can reach England, the spring will be far advanced, and the national affairs in a manner over with those who are not in the immediate administration.

Were that indeed your lordship's lot at present, I know not whether, in regard to my country, I should dare throw such amusements as these in your way. Yet even in this case, I would venture to say, however, in defence of my project, and of the cause of painting, that could my young hero come to your lordship as well represented as he might have been, either by the hand of a Marat or a Jordano (the masters who were in being, and in repute, when I first travelled here in Italy), the picture itself, whatever the treatise proved, would have been worth notice, and might have become a present worthy of our court, and prince's palace, especially were it so blessed as to lodge within it a royal issue of her majesty's. Such a piece of furniture might well fit the gallery, or hall of exercises, where our young princes should

learn their usual lessons. And to see Virtue in this garb and action, might perhaps be no slight memorandum hereafter to a royal youth, who should one day come to undergo this trial himself; on which his own happiness, as well as the fate of Europe and the world, would in so great a measure depend.

This, my lord, is making (as you see) the most I can of my project, and setting off my amusements with the best colour I am able; that I may be the more excuseable in communicating them to your lordship, and expressing thus, with what zeal I am, my lord, your lordship's most faithful humble servant.

Naples, March 6,
N. S. 1712.

LETTER XCV.

From the Earl of Shaftesbury to the Earl of Oxford.

Reygate, March 29, 1711.

My lord,
THE honour you have done me in many kind inquiries after my health, and the favour you have shewn me lately, in forwarding the only means I have left for my recovery, by trying the air of a warmer climate, obliges me, ere I leave England, to return your lordship my most humble thanks and acknowledgments in this manner, since I am unable to do it in a better. I might perhaps, my lord, do injustice to myself, having had no opportunity of late years to pay my particular respects to you, if I should attempt any otherwise to compliment your lordship on the late honours you have received, than by appealing to the early acquaintance and strict correspondence I had once the honour to maintain with you and your family, for which I had been bred almost from my infancy to have the highest regard. Your lordship well knows my principles and behaviour from the first hour I engaged in any public concern, and with what zeal I spent some years of my life in supporting your interest, which I thought of greater moment to the public than my own or family's could ever be. What the natural effects are of private friendship so founded, and what the consequence of different opinions intervening,

your lordship, who is so good a judge of men and things, can better resolve with yourself, than I can possibly suggest. And being so knowing in friends (of whom your lordship has acquired so many), you can recollect how those ties or obligations have been hitherto preserved towards you, and whose friendships, affections, and principles you may for the future best depend upon in all circumstances and variations, public and private. For my own part, I shall say only, that I very sincerely wish you all happiness, and can with no man living congratulate more heartily on what I account real honour and prosperity. Your conduct of the public will be the just earnest and insurance of your greatness and power; and I shall then chiefly congratulate with your lordship on your merited honours and advancement, when by the happy effects it appears evidently in the service of what cause, and for the advantage of what interest, they were acquired and enjoyed. Had I been to wish by what hands the public should have been served, the honour of the first part (your lordship well knows) had fallen to you long since. If others, from whom I least hoped, have done greatly and as became them, I hope, if possible, you will still exceed all they have performed, and accomplish the great work so gloriously begun and carried on for the rescue of liberty, and the deliverance of Europe and mankind. And in this presumption I cannot but remain with the same zeal and sincerity as ever, my lord, &c.

LETTER XCVI.

From the Earl of Shaftesbury to Lord Godolphin.

Reygate, May 27, 1711.

My lord,
BEING about to attempt a journey to Italy, to try what a warmer climate (if I am able to reach it) may do towards the restoring me a little breath and life, it is impossible for me to stir hence till I have acquitted myself of my respects the best I can to your lordship, to whom alone, had I but strength enough to make my compliments, and pay a day's attendance in town, I should think myself sufficiently happy in my weak state of health. I am indeed, my lord, little able to render services of any kind; nor do I pretend to offer myself in such a capacity to any one, except your lordship only. But could I flatter myself that ere I parted hence, or while I passed through France or staid in Italy, I could any where, in the least trifle, or in the highest concern, render any manner of service to your lordship, I should be proud of such a commission. Sure I am, in what relates to your honour and name (if that can receive ever any advantage from such an hand as mine) your public as well as private merit will not pass unremembered, into whatever region or climate I am transferred. No one has a more thorough knowledge in that kind than myself, nor no one there is, who on this account has a juster right to profess himself, as I shall ever do, with highest obligation and most constant zeal, my lord, your lordship's most faithful and most obedient humble servant.

BOOK THE THIRD.

LETTERS OF THE LAST CENTURY, AND OF LATE DATE.

SECTION I.

FROM MR. POPE AND HIS FRIENDS.

LETTER I.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Wycherley.

Binfield in Windsor Forest, Dec. 26, 1704*.

It was certainly a great satisfaction to me to see and converse with a man, whom in his writings I had so long known with pleasure; but it was a high addition to it to hear you, at our very first meeting, doing justice to our dead friend Mr. Dryden. I was not so happy as to know him: *Virgilium tantum vidi*. Had I been born early enough, I must have known and loved him; for I have been assured, not only by yourself, but by Mr. Congreve and sir William Trumbul, that his personal qualities were as amiable as his poetical, notwithstanding the many libellous misrepresentations of them, against which the former of these gentlemen has told me he will one day vindicate him†. I suppose those injuries were begun by the violence of party; but it is no doubt they were continued by envy at his success and fame. And those scribblers, who attacked him

in his latter times, were only like gnats in a summer's evening, which are never very troublesome but in the finest and most glorious season; but his fire, like the sun's, shined clearest towards the setting.

You must not therefore imagine, that when you told me my own performances were above those critics, I was so vain as to believe it: and yet I may not be so humble as to think myself quite below their notice. For critics, as they are birds of prey, have ever a natural inclination to carrion; and though such poor writers as I are but beggars, no beggar is so poor but he can keep a cur, and no author is so beggarly but he can keep a critic. I am far from thinking the attacks of such people either any honour or dishonour even to me, much less to Mr. Dryden. I agree with you, that whatever lesser wits have risen since his death, are but like stars appearing when the sun is set, that twinkle only in his absence, and with the rays they have borrowed from him. Our wit (as you call it) is but reflection or imitation, therefore scarce to be called ours. True wit, I believe, may be defined a justness of thought and a facility of expression; or (in the midwives' phrase) a perfect conception, with

* The author's age then sixteen.

† He since did so in his Dedication to the duke of Newcastle, prefixed to the duodecimo edition of Dryden's Plays, 1717.

an easy delivery. However, this is far from a complete definition. Pray help me to a better, as I doubt not you can. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

From the same to the same.

LETTER II.

From the same to the same.

March 25, 1705.

WHEN I write to you, I foresee a long letter, and ought to beg your patience beforehand; for if it proves the longest it will be of course the worst I have troubled you with. Yet, to express my gratitude at large for your obliging letter is not more my duty than my interest, as some people will abundantly thank you for one piece of kindness, to put you in mind of bestowing another. The more favourable you are to me, the more distinctly I see my faults: spots and blemishes, you know, are never so plainly discovered as in the brightest sunshine. Thus I am mortified by those commendations which were designed to encourage me; for praise to a young wit is like rain to a tender flower; if it be moderately bestowed, it cheers and revives; but if too lavishly, overcharges and depresses him. Most men in years, as they are generally discouragers of youth, are like old trees, that, being past bearing themselves, will suffer no young plants to flourish beneath them; but, as if it were not enough to have outdone all your coevals in wit, you will excel them in good-nature too. As for my green essays*, if you find any pleasure in them, it must be such as a man naturally takes in observing the first shoots and buddings of a tree which he has raised himself: and it is impossible they should be esteemed any otherwise than as we value fruits for being early, which nevertheless are the most insipid, and the worst of the year. In a word, I must blame you for treating me with so much compliment, which is at best but the smoke of friendship. I neither write nor converse with you to gain your praise, but your affection. Be so much my friend as to appear my enemy, and to tell me my faults, if not as a young man, at least as an inexperienced writer. I am, &c.

* His Pastorals, written at sixteen years of age.

April 30, 1705.

I CANNOT contend with you; you must give me leave at once to wave all your compliments, and to collect only this in general from them, that your design is to encourage me: but I separate from all the rest that paragraph or two in which you make me so warm an offer of your friendship. Were I possessed of that, it would put an end to all those speeches with which you now make me blush; and change them to wholesome advices and free sentiments, which might make me wiser and happier. I know it is the general opinion, that friendship is best contracted betwixt persons of equal age; but I have so much interest to be of another mind, that you must pardon me if I cannot forbear telling you a few notions of mine, in opposition to that opinion.

In the first place, it is observable, that the love we bear to our friends is generally caused by our finding the same dispositions in them which we feel in ourselves. This is but self love at the bottom; whereas the affection betwixt people of different ages cannot well be so, the inclinations of such being commonly various. The friendship of two young men is often occasioned by love of pleasure or voluptuousness, each being desirous for his own sake of one to assist or encourage him in the course he pursues: as that of two old men is frequently on the score of some profit, lucre, or design upon others. Now, as a young man, who is less acquainted with the ways of the world, has in all probability less of interest; and an old man, who may be weary of himself, has, or should have, less of self love—so the friendship between them is more likely to be true, and unmixed with too much self-regard. One may add to this, that such a friendship is of greater use and advantage to both; for the old man will grow gay and agreeable to please the young one; and the young man more discreet and prudent by the help of the old one; so it may prove a cure of those epidemical diseases of age and youth, sourness and madness. I hope you will not need many arguments to convince you of the

possibility of this; one alone abundantly satisfies me, and convinces to the heart; which is, that young as I am, and old as you are*, I am your entirely affectionate, &c.

LETTER IV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Wycherley.

Oct. 26, 1705.

I HAVE NOW changed the scene from the town to the country; from Will's coffee house to Windsor forest. I find no other difference than this betwixt the common town wits and the downright country fools; that the first are perty in the wrong, with a little more flourish and gaiety; and the last neither in the right nor the wrong, but confirmed in a stupid settled medium betwixt both. However, methinks, these are most in the right, who quietly and easily resign themselves over to the gentle reign of dulness, which the wits must do at last, though after a great deal of noise and resistance. Ours are a sort of modest in-offensive people, who neither have sease, nor pretend to any, but enjoy a jovial sort of dulness; they are commonly known in the world by the name of Honest, Civil Gentlemen: they live, much as they ride, at random; a kind of hunting life, pursuing with earnestness and hazard something not worth the catching; never in the way, nor out of it. I cannot but prefer solitude to the company of all these; for though a man's self may possibly be the worst fellow to converse with in the world, yet one would think the company of a person whom we have the greatest regard to and affection for, could not be very unpleasant. As a man in love with a mistress desires no conversation but hers, so a man in love with himself (as most men are) may be best pleased with his own. Besides, if the truest and most useful knowledge be the knowledge of ourselves, solitude, conducing most to make us look into ourselves, should be the most instructive state of life. We see nothing more commonly, than men who, for the sake of the circumstantial part, and mere outside of life, have been half their days rambling out of their nature, and ought to be sent into solitude to

study themselves over again. People are usually spoiled, instead of being taught at their coming into the world: whereas, by being more conversant with obscurity, without any pains, they would naturally follow what they are meant for. In a word, if a man be a coxcomb, solitude is his best school; and if he be a fool, it is his best sanctuary.

These are good reasons for my own stay here; but I wish I could give you any for your coming hither, except that I earnestly invite you; and yet I cannot help saying I have suffered a great deal of discontent that you do not come, though I so little merit that you should.

I must complain of the shortness of your last. Those who have most wit, like those who have most money, are generally most sparing of either.

LETTER V.

From the same to the same.

April 10, 1706.

By one of yours of the last month, you desire me to select, if possible, some things from the first volume of your *Miscellanies*†, which may be altered so as to appear again. I doubted your meaning in this: whether it was to pick out the best of those verses (as those on the Idleness of Business, on Ignorance, on Laziness, &c.) to make the method and numbers exact, and avoid repetitions. For though (upon reading them on this occasion) I believe they might receive such an alteration with advantage, yet they would not be changed so much but any one would know them for the same at first sight. Or if you mean to improve the worst pieces; which are such as, to render them very good, would require great addition, and almost the entire new writing of them. Or, lastly, if you mean the middle sort, as the Songs, and Love-verses: for these will need only to be shortened to omit repetition; the words remaining very little different from what they were before. Pray let me know your mind in this, for I am utterly at a loss. Yet I have tried what I could do to some of the songs, and the poems on Laziness and Ignorance; but cannot (even in my own partial judgment) think my alterations much to

* Mr. Wycherley was at this time about seventy years old: Mr. Pope under seventeen.

† Printed in folio, in the year 1704.

the purpose ; so that I must needs desire you would apply your care wholly at present to those which are yet unpublished, of which there are more than enough to make a considerable volume, of full as good ones ; nay, I believe of better than any in Vol. I, which I could wish you would defer, at least till you have finished these that are yet unprinted.

I send you a sample of some few of these ; namely, the verses to Mr. Waller in his old age ; your new ones on the duke of Marlborough, and two others. I have done all that I thought could be of advantage to them : some I have contracted, as we do sunbeams, to improve their energy and force : some I have taken quite away, as we take branches from a tree to add to the fruit ; others I have entirely new expressed, and turned more into poetry. Donne (like one of his successors) had infinitely more wit than he wanted versification ; for the great dealers of wit, like those in trade, take least pains to set off their goods ; while the haberdashers of small wit spare for no decorations or ornaments. You have commissioned me to paint your shop ; and I have done my best to brush you up like your neighbours*. But I can no more pretend to the merit of the production than a midwife to the virtues and good qualities of the child she helps into the light.

The few things I have entirely added, you will excuse : you may take them lawfully for your own, because they are no more than sparks lighted up by your fire : and you may omit them at last, if you think them but squibs in your triumphs. I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 20, 1707.

MR. ENGLEFIELD, being upon his journey to London, tells me I must write to you by him, which I do, not more to comply with his desire than to gratify my own ; though I did it so lately by the messenger you sent hither : I take it too as an opportunity of sending you the fair

copy of the poem on Dulness†, which was not then finished, and which I should not care to hazard by the common post. Mr. Englefield is ignorant of the contents ; and I hope your prudence will let him remain so, for my sake no less than your own : since, if you should reveal any thing of this nature, it would be no wonder reports should be raised, and there are those (I fear) who would be ready to improve them to my disadvantage. I am sorry you told the great man, whom you met in the court of requests, that your papers were in my hands. No man alive shall ever know any such thing from me, and I give you this warning besides, that though yourself should say I had any ways assisted you, I am notwithstanding resolved to deny it.

The method of the copy I send you is very different from what it was, and much more regular : for the better help of your memory, I desire you to compare it by the figures in the margin, answering to the same in this letter. The Poem is now divided into four parts, marked with the literal figures 1, 2, 3, 4. The first contains the Praise of Dulness ; and shews how upon several suppositions it passes for, 1, religion ; 2, philosophy ; 3, example ; 4, wit ; and, 5, the cause of wit, and the end of it. The second part contains the Advantages of Dulness ; 1st, in business ; and, 2dly, at court ; where the similitudes of the bias of a bowl, and the weights of a clock, are directly tending to the subject, though introduced before in a place where there was no mention made of those advantages (which was your only objection to my adding them). The third contains the Happiness of Dulness in all stations ; and shews, in a great many particulars, that it is so fortunate as to be esteemed some good quality or other in all sorts of people : that it is thought quiet, sense, caution, policy, prudence, majesty, valour, circumspection, honesty, &c. The fourth part I have wholly added, as a climax which sums up all the praise, advantage, and happiness of Dulness in a few words, and

* Several of Mr. Pope's lines, very easy to be distinguished, may be found in the posthumous editions of Wycherley's Poems, particularly those on Solitude, on the Public, and on the Mixed Life.

† The original of it in blots, and with figures of the references from copy to copy, in Mr. Pope's hand, is yet extant among other such brouillons of Mr. Wycherley's poems, corrected by him.

strengthens them by the opposition of the disgrace, disadvantage, and unhappiness of wit, with which it concludes.

Though the whole be as short again as at first, there is not one thought omitted, but what is a repetition of something in your first volume, or in this very paper. Some thoughts are contracted, where they seemed encompassed with too many words; and some new expressed, or added, where I thought there wanted heightening (as you will see particularly in the simile of the clock-weights*); and the versification throughout is, I believe, such as nobody can be shocked at. The repeated permissions you give me of dealing freely with you, will (I hope) excuse what I have done: for if I have not spared you when I thought severity would do you a kindness, I have not mangled you where I thought there was no absolute need of amputation. As to particulars, I can satisfy you better when we meet. In the mean time, pray write to me when you can; you cannot too often.

LETTER VII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Wycherley.

Nov. 29, 1707.

THE compliments you make me, in regard of any inconsiderable service I could do you, are very unkind; and do but tell me, in other words, that my friend has so mean an opinion of me, as to think I expect acknowledgments for trifles; which, upon my faith, I shall equally take amiss, whether made to myself or to any other. For God's sake (my dear friend) think better of me; and believe I desire no sort of favour so much as that of serving you more considerably than I have yet been able to do.

I shall proceed in this manner with some others of your pieces: but since you desire I would not deface your copy for the future, and only mark the repetitions, I must, as soon as I have marked these, transcribe what is left on another paper; and in that blot, alter, and add all I can devise for their improvement;

* These two similes, of the bias of a bowl and the weights of a clock, were at length put into the first book of the *Dunciad*; and thus we have the history of their birth, fortunes, and final establishment.

for you are sensible, the omission of repetitions is but one, and the easiest part of yours and my design; there remaining besides to rectify the method, to connect the matter, and to mend the expression and versification. I will go next upon the poems of Solitude, on the Public, and on the Mixt Life, the Bill of Fare, the Praises of Avarice, and some others.

I must take notice of what you say, of "my pains to make your dulness methodical;" and of your hint, "That the sprightliness of wit despises method." This is true enough, if by wit you mean no more than fancy or conceit; but in the better notion of wit, considered as propriety, surely method is not only necessary for perspicuity and harmony of parts, but gives beauty even to the minute and particular thoughts, which receive an additional advantage from those which precede or follow in their due place. You remember a simile Mr. Dryden used in conversation, of feathers in the crowns of the wild Indians; which they not only choose for the beauty of their colours, but place them in such a manner as to reflect a lustre on each other. I will not disguise any of my sentiments from you: to methodize, in your case, is full as necessary as to strike out; otherwise you had better destroy the whole frame, and reduce them into single thoughts in prose, like Rochefoucault, as I have more than once hinted to you.

LETTER VIII.

From the same to the same.

May 20, 1709.

I AM glad you received the Miscellany†, if it were only to shew you that there are as bad poets in this nation as your servant. This modern custom, of appearing in miscellanies, is very useful to the poets, who, like other thieves, escape by getting into a crowd, and herd together like banditti, safe only in their multitude. Methinks Strada has given a good description of these kind of collections: "Nullus hodie mortalium aut nascitur aut moritur, aut præliatur, aut rusticatur, aut abit peregre, aut redit, aut nubit, aut est, aut non est (nam etiam

† Jacob Tonson's sixth vol. of *Miscellany Poems*.

mortuis isti canunt) cui non illo exemplo cadunt Epicedia, Genethliaca, Protreptica, Panegyrica, Epithalamia, Vaticinia, Propemptica, Soterica, Paranetica, Næ-nias, Nugas." As to the success which, you say, my part has met with, it is to be attributed to what you were pleased to say of me to the world; which you do well to call your prophecy, since whatever is said in my favour must be a prediction of things that are not yet: you, like a true godfather, engage on my part for much more than ever I can perform. My pastoral Muse, like other country girls, is put out of countenance by what you courtiers say to her; yet I hope you would not deceive me too far, as knowing that a young scribbler's vanity needs no recruits from abroad; for Nature, like an indulgent mother, kindly takes care to supply her sons with as much of their own as is necessary for their satisfaction. If my verses should meet with a few flying commendations, Virgil has taught me, that a young author has not too much reason to be pleased with them when he considers that the natural consequence of praise is envy and calumny.

—*Si ultra placitum laudarit, baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.*

When once a man has appeared as a poet, he may give up his pretensions to all the rich and thriving arts: those who have once made their court to those mistresses without portions, the Muses, are never like to set up for fortunes: but for my part, I shall be satisfied if I can lose my time agreeably this way, without losing my reputation: as for gaining any, I am as indifferent in the matter as Falstaff was; and may say of fame as he did of honour, "If it comes, it comes unlook'd for; and there's an end on't." I can be content with a bare saving game, without being thought an eminent hand (with which title Jacob has graciously dignified his adventurers and volunteers in poetry). Jacob creates poets as kings sometimes do knights, not for their honour, but for their money. Certainly he ought to be esteemed a worker of miracles, who is grown rich by poetry.

What authors lose, their booksellers have won;

So pimps grow rich, while gallants are undone.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

April 15, 1710.

I RECEIVED your most extreme kind letter but just now. It found me over those papers you mention, which have been my employment ever since Easter Monday: I hope before Michaelmas to have discharged my task, which, upon the word of a friend, is the most pleasing one I could be put upon. Since you are so near going into Shropshire (whither I shall not care to write of this matter, for fear of the miscarriage of any letters) I must desire your leave to give you a plain and sincere account of what I have found from a more serious application to them. Upon comparison with the former volume, I find much more repeated than I till now imagined, as well as in the present volume; which, if (as you told me last) you would have me dash over with a line, will deface the whole copy extremely, and to a degree that (I fear) may displease you. I have everywhere marked in the margins the page and line, both in this and the other part. But if you order me not to cross the lines, or would any way else limit my commission, you will oblige me by doing it in your next letter; for I am at once equally fearful of sparing you, and of offending you by too impudent a correction. Hitherto, however, I have crossed them so as to be legible, because you bade me. When I think all the repetitions are struck out in a copy, I sometimes find more upon dipping in the first volume; and the number increases so much, that I believe more shortening will be requisite than you may be willing to bear with, unless you are in good earnest resolved to have no thought repeated. Pray forgive this freedom, which as I must be sincere in this case, so I could not but take; and let me know if I am to go on at this rate, or if you would prescribe any other method.

I am very glad you continue your resolution of seeing me in my hermitage this summer. The sooner you return, the sooner I shall be happy; which indeed my want of any company that is entertaining or esteemable, together with frequent infirmities and pains, hinder me from being in your absence. It is (I am sure) a real truth, that my sickness

cannot make me quite weary of myself when I have you with me ; and I shall want no company but yours, when you are here.

You see how freely and with how little care I talk, rather than write to you. This is one of the many advantages of friendship, that one can say to one's friend the things that stand in need of pardon, and at the same time be sure of it. Indeed, I do not know whether or no the letters of friends are the worse for being fit for none else to read. It is an argument of the trust reposed in a friend's good-nature, when one writes such things to him as require a good portion of it. I have experienced yours so often and so long, that I can now no more doubt of the greatness of it than I hope you do of the greatness of my affection, or of the sincerity with which I am, &c.

LETTER X.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Wycherley.

May 10, 1710.

I AM sorry you persist to take ill my not accepting your invitation, and to find (if I mistake not) your exception not unmixed with some suspicion. Be certain I shall most carefully observe your request, not to cross over, or deface the copy of your papers for the future, and only to mark in the margin the repetitions. But as this can serve no farther than to get rid of those repetitions, and no way rectify the method, nor connect the matter, nor improve the poetry in expression or numbers, without further blotting, adding, and altering ; so it really is my opinion and desire, that you shall take your papers out of my hands into your own, and that no alterations may be made but when both of us are present ; when you may be satisfied with every blot, as well as every addition, and nothing be put upon the papers but what you shall give your own sanction and assent to at the same time.

Do not be so unjust, as to imagine from hence that I would decline any part of this task ; on the contrary, you know, I have been at the pains of transcribing some pieces, at once to comply with your desire of not defacing the copy, and yet to lose no time in proceeding upon the

correction. I will go on the same way, if you please ; though truly it is (as I have often told you) my sincere opinion, that the greater part would make a much better figure as single maxims and reflections in prose, after the manner of your favourite Rochefoucault, than in verse* ; and this, when nothing more is done but marking the repetitions in the margin, will be an easy task to proceed upon, notwithstanding the bad memory you complain of. I am unfeignedly, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER XI.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Walsh.

Windsor Forest, July 2, 1706.

I CANNOT omit the first opportunity of making you my acknowledgments for reviewing those papers of mine. You have no less right to correct me than the same hand that raised a tree has to prune it. I am convinced as well as you, that one may correct too much ; for in poetry as in painting, a man may lay colours one upon another, till they stiffen and deaden the piece. Besides, to bestow heightening on every part is monstrous : some parts ought to be lower than the rest ; and nothing looks more ridiculous than a work, where the thoughts, however different in their own nature, seem all on a level : it is like a meadow newly mown, where weeds, grass, and flowers, are all laid even, and appear undistinguished. I believe too that sometimes our first thoughts are the best ; as the first squeezing of the grapes makes the finest and richest wine.

I have not attempted any thing of a Pastoral Comedy, because, I think, the taste of our age will not relish a poem of that sort. People seek for what they call Wit, on all subjects, and in all places ; not considering that Nature loves truth so well, that it hardly ever admits of flourishing : conceit is to nature, what paint is to beauty ; it is not only needless, but impairs what it would improve.

* Mr. Wycherley lived five years after, to December 1715 ; but little progress was made in this design, through his old age, and the increase of his infirmities. However, some of the verses which had been touched by Mr. P. with *ccviii* of these maxims in prose, were found among his papers, which, having the misfortune to fall into the hands of a mercenary, were published in 1782, in octavo, under the title of *The Posthumous Works of W. Wycherley, Esq.*

There is a certain majesty in simplicity, which is far above all the quaintness of wit: insomuch, that the critics have excluded wit from the loftiest poetry, as well as the lowest, and forbid it to the Epic no less than the Pastoral. I should certainly displease all those who are charmed with Guarini and Bonarelli, and imitate Tasso not only in the simplicity of his thoughts, but in that of the fable too. If surprising discoveries should have place in the story of a pastoral comedy, I believe it would be more agreeable to probability to make them the effects of chance than of design; intrigue not being very consistent with that innocence which ought to constitute a shepherd's character. There is nothing in all the *Aminta* (as I remember) but happens by mere accident; unless it be the meeting of *Aminta* with *Sylvia* at the fountain, which is the contrivance of *Daphne*; and even that is the most simple in the world: the contrary is observable in *Pastor Fido*, where *Corisca* is so perfect a mistress of intrigue, that the plot could not have been brought to pass without her. I am inclined to think the pastoral comedy has another disadvantage, as to the manners: its general design is to make us in love with the innocence of a rural life, so that to introduce shepherds of a vicious character must in some measure debase it; and hence it may come to pass, that even the virtuous characters will not shine so much, for want of being opposed to their contraries. These thoughts are purely my own, and therefore I have reason to doubt them: but I hope your judgment will set me right.

I would beg your opinion too as to another point: it is, How far the liberty of borrowing may extend? I have defended it sometimes by saying, that it seems not so much the perfection of sense, to say things that had never been said before, as to express those best that have been said oftenest; and that writers, in the case of borrowing from others, are like trees, which of themselves would produce only one sort of fruit; but by being grafted upon others, may yield variety. A mutual commerce makes poetry flourish; but then poets, like merchants, should repay with something of their own what they take from others; not like pirates, make prize of all they meet. I desire you to tell me

sincerely, if I have not stretched this license too far in these Pastorals: I hope to become a critic by your precepts, and a poet by your example. Since I have seen your *Eclogues*, I cannot be much pleased with my own; however, you have not taken away all my vanity, so long as you give me leave to profess myself yours, &c.

LETTER XII.

From the same to the same.

Oct. 22, 1706.

AFTER the thoughts I have already sent you on the subject of English versification, you desire my opinion as to some farther particulars. There are indeed certain niceties, which, though not much observed even by correct versifiers, I cannot but think deserve to be better regarded.

1. It is not enough that nothing offends the ear, but a good poet will adapt the very sounds, as well as words, to the thing he treats of: so that there is (if one may express it so) a style of sound. As in describing a gliding stream, the numbers should run easy and flowing; in describing a rough torrent or deluge, sonorous and swelling; and so of the rest. This is evident everywhere in *Homer* and *Virgil*, and nowhere else, that I know of, to any observable degree. The following examples will make this plain, which I have taken from *Vida*:

Molle viam tacito lapsu per levia radit.

Incedit tardo molimine subsidendo.

Luctantes ventos, tempestatesque sonoras.

Immenso cum præcipitans ruit Oceano Nox.

Telum imbellè sine ictu, conjecit.

Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, Pastor.

Ferte citi flammas, date tela; repellite pestem.

This, I think, is what very few observe in practice, and is undoubtedly of wonderful force in imprinting the image on the reader: we have one excellent example of it in our own language, *Mr. Dryden's Ode on St. Cæcilia's Day*, entitled *Alexander's Feast*.

2. Every nice ear must (I believe) have observed, that in any smooth English verse of ten syllables, there is naturally a pause at the fourth, fifth, or sixth syllable. It is upon these the ear rests; and upon the judicious change and ma-

nagement of which depends the variety of versification. For example,

At the fifth,

Where'er thy navy | spreads her canvass wings.

At the fourth,

Honour to thee | and peace to all she brings.

At the sixth,

Like tracks of leverets | in morning snow.

Now I fancy, that to preserve an exact harmony and variety, the pause at the 4th or 6th should not be continued above three lines together, without the interposition of another; else it will be apt to weary the ear with one continued tone; at least, it does mine: that at the 5th runs quicker, and carries not quite so dead a weight, so tires not so much, though it be continued longer.

3. Another nicety is in relation to expletives, whether words or syllables, which are made use of purely to supply a vacancy: *Do* before verbs plural is absolutely such; and it is not improbable but future refiners may explode *did* and *does* in the same manner, which are almost always used for the sake of rhyme. The same cause has occasioned the promiscuous use of *you* and *thou* to the same person, which can never sound so graceful as either one or the other.

4. I would also object to the irruption of Alexandrine verses, of twelve syllables, which, I think, should never be allowed but when some remarkable beauty or propriety in them atones for the liberty. Mr. Dryden has been too free of these, especially in his later works. I am of the same opinion as to triple rhymes.

5. I could equally object to the repetition of the same rhymes within four or six lines of each other, as tiresome to the ear through their monotony.

6. Monosyllable lines, unless very artfully managed, are stiff or languishing; but may be beautiful to express melancholy, slowness, or labour.

7. As to the hiatus, or gap between two words, which is caused by two vowels opening on each other (upon which you desire me to be particular), I think the rule in this case is either to use the *cæsura*, or admit the hiatus, just as the ear is least shocked by either; for the *cæsura* sometimes offends the ear more than the hiatus itself: and our language is naturally overcharged with con-

sonants. As for example; if in this verse,

The old have int'rest ever in their eye,
we shall say, to avoid the hiatus,

But th' old have int'rest.

The hiatus which has the worst effect is when one word ends with the same vowel that begins the following; and next to this, those vowels whose sounds come nearest each other are most to be avoided. O, A, or U, will bear a more full and graceful sound than E, I, or Y. I know, some people will think these observations trivial: and therefore I am glad to corroborate them by some great authorities, which I have met with in Tully and Quintilian. In the fourth book of Rhetoric to Herennius, are these words: "Fugiemus crebras vocalium concursiones, quæ vastam atque hiantem reddunt orationem; ut hoc est, *Baccæ æneæ amœnissimæ impendebant.*" And Quintilian, l. ix, cap. 4, "Vocalium concursus cum accidit, hiat et intersistit, et quasi laborat oratio. Pessime longæ quæ easdem inter se literas committunt, sonabunt; præcipuus tamen erit hiatus earum quæ cavo aut patulo ore efferuntur. *E plenior litera est, I angustior.*" But he goes on to reprove the excess, on the other hand, of being too solicitous in this matter, and says, admirably, "Nescio an negligentia in hoc, aut sollicitudo sit pejor." So likewise Tully (Orat. ad Brut.): "Theopompum reprehendunt, quod eas literas tanto opere fugerit, etsi idem magister ejus Socrates;" which last author, as Turnebus on Quintilian observes, has hardly one hiatus in all his works. Quintilian tells us, that Tully and Demosthenes did not much observe this nicety, though Tully himself says, in his Orator, "*Crebra ista vocum concursio, quam magna ex parte vitiosam, fugit Demosthenes.*" If I am not mistaken, Malherbe of all the moderns has been the most scrupulous in this point; and I think Menage, in his observations upon him, says he has not one in his poems. To conclude, I believe the hiatus should be avoided with more care in poetry than in oratory; and I would constantly try to prevent it, unless where the cutting it off is more prejudicial to the sound than the hiatus itself. I am, &c.

[Mr. Walsh died at forty-nine years old, in the year 1708, the year before the Essay on Criticism was printed, which concludes with his elogy.]

LETTER XIII.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

March 18, 1708.

I BELIEVE it was with me when I left the town, as it is with a great many men when they leave the world, whose loss itself they do not so much regret, as that of their friends whom they leave behind in it. For I do not know one thing for which I can envy London, but for your continuing there. Yet I guess you will expect me to recant this expression, when I tell you that Sappho (by which heathenish name you have christened a very orthodox lady) did not accompany me into the country. Well, you have your lady in the town still, and I have my heart in the country still, which, being wholly unemployed as yet, has the more room in it for my friends, and does not want a corner at your service. You have extremely obliged me by your frankness and kindness; and if I have abused it by too much freedom on my part, I hope you will attribute it to the natural openness of my temper, which hardly knows how to shew respect where it feels affection. I would love my friend, as my mistress, without ceremony; and hope a little rough usage sometimes may not be more displeasing to the one than it is to the other.

If you have any curiosity to know in what manner I live, or rather lose a life, Martial will inform you in one line:

Prandeo, poto, cano, ludo, lego, cæno, quiesco.

Every day with me is literally another yesterday, for it is exactly the same: it has the same business, which is poetry; and the same pleasure, which is idleness. A man might indeed pass his time much better, but I question if any man could pass it much easier. If you will visit our shades this spring, which I very much desire, you may perhaps instruct me to manage my game more wisely; but at present I am satisfied to trifle away my time any way, rather than let it stick by me; as shop-keepers are glad to be rid of those goods at any rate, which would otherwise always be lying upon their hands.

Sir, If you will favour me sometimes with your letters, it will be a great satisfaction to me on several accounts; and on this in particular, that it will shew me

(to my comfort) that even a wise man is sometimes very idle; for so you needs must be, when you can find leisure to write to you, &c.

LETTER XIV.

From the same to the same.

April 17, 1708.

I HAVE nothing to say to you in this letter; but I was resolved to write to tell you so. Why should not I content myself with so many great examples, of deep divines, profound casuists, grave philosophers; who have written not letters only, but whole tomes and voluminous treatises about nothing? Why should a fellow like me, who all his life does nothing, be ashamed to write nothing; and that to one who has nothing to do but to read it? But perhaps you will say, the whole world has something to do, something to talk of, something to wish for, something to be employed about: but pray, sir, cast up the account, put all these things together, and what is the sum total but just nothing? I have no more to say, but to desire you to give my service (that is nothing) to your friends, and to believe that I am nothing more than your, &c.

"Ex nihilo nil fit."—Lucr.

LETTER XV.

From the same to the same.

May 10, 1708.

You talk of fame and glory, and of the great men of antiquity: pray tell me, what are all your great dead men, but so many little living letters? What a vast reward is here for all the ink wasted by writers, and all the blood spilt by princes! There was in old time one Severus, a Roman emperor. I dare say you never called him by any other name in your life: and yet in his days he was styled Lucius, Septimius, Severus, Pius, Pertinax, Augustus, Parthicus, Adiabenicus, Arabicus, Maximus, and what not! What a prodigious waste of letters has time made! What a number have here dropt off, and left the poor surviving seven unattended! For my own part, four are all I have to care for; and I will be judged by you if any man could live in less compass? Well, for the future I will drown all high thoughts in the

lethe of cowslip-wine ; as for fame, renowned, reputation, take them, critics !

*Tradam protervis in Mare Criticum
Ventis.*

If ever I seek for immortality here, may I be damned ; for there is not so much danger in a poet's being damned :

Damnation follows death in other men,
But your damn'd poet lives and writes again.

LETTER XVI.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

November 1, 1708.

I HAVE been so well satisfied with the country ever since I saw you, that I have not once thought of the town, nor inquired of any one in it besides Mr. Wycherley and yourself. And from him I understand of your journey this summer into Leicestershire ; from whence I guess you are returned by this time to your old apartment in the widow's corner, to your old business of comparing critics, and reconciling commentators, and to your old diversions of losing a game at piquet with the ladies, and half a play, or a quarter of a play at the theatre : where you are none of the malicious audience, but the chief of amorous spectators ; and for the infirmity of one sense*, which there, for the most part, could only serve to disgust you, enjoy the vigour of another, which ravishes you.

You know, when one sense is supprest,
It but retires into the rest,

according to the poetical, not the learned, Dodwell ; who has done one thing worthy of eternal memory ; wrote two lines in his life that are not nonsense ! So you have the advantage of being entertained with all the beauty of the boxes, without being troubled with any of the dulness of the stage. You are so good a critic, that it is the greatest happiness of the modern poets that you do not hear their works ; and next, that you are not so arrant a critic as to damn them (like the rest) without hearing. But now I talk of those critics, I have good news to tell you concerning myself, for which I expect you should congratulate with me : it is that, beyond all my expectations, and far above my de-

merits, I have been most mercifully reprieved by the sovereign power of Jacob Tonson, from being brought forth to public punishment ; and respited from time to time from the hands of those barbarous executioners of the Muses, whom I was just now speaking of. It often happens, that guilty poets, like other guilty criminals, when once they are known and proclaimed, deliver themselves into the hands of justice, only to prevent others from doing it more to their disadvantage ; and not out of any ambition to spread their fame, by being executed in the face of the world, which is a fame but of short continuance. That poet were a happy man who could but obtain a grant to preserve his for ninety-nine years ; for those names very rarely last so many days, which are planted either in Jacob Tonson's, or the ordinary of Newgate's Miscellanies.

I have an hundred things to say to you, which shall be deferred till I have the happiness of seeing you in town, for the season now draws on that invites every body thither. Some of them I had communicated to you by letters before this, if I had not been uncertain where you passed your time the last season ; so much fine weather, I doubt not, has given you all the pleasure you could desire from the country, and your own thoughts the best company in it. But nothing could allure Mr. Wycherley to our forest ; he continued (as you told me long since he would) an obstinate lover of the town, in spite of friendship and fair weather. Therefore, henceforward, to all those considerable qualities I know you possessed of, I shall add that of prophecy. But I still believe Mr. Wycherley's intentions were good, and am satisfied that he promises nothing but with a real design to perform it : how much soever his other excellent qualities are above my imitation, his sincerity, I hope, is not ; and it is with the utmost that I am, sir, &c.

LETTER XVII.

From the same to the same.

Jan. 22, 1708-9.

I HAD sent you the inclosed papers † before this time, but that I intended to

* His hearing.

† This was a translation of the first book of Statius, done when the author was but fourteen

have brought them myself, and afterwards could find no opportunity of sending them without suspicion of their mis-carrying; not that they are of the least value, but for fear somebody might be foolish enough to imagine them so, and inquisitive enough to discover those faults which I (by your help) would correct. I therefore beg the favour of you to let them go no farther than your chamber, and to be very free of your remarks in the margins, not only in regard to the accuracy, but to the fidelity of the translation; which I have not had time to compare with its original. And I desire you to be the more severe, as it is much more criminal for me to make another speak nonsense, than to do it in my own proper person. For your better help in comparing it, it may be fit to tell you, that this is not an entire version of the first book. There is an omission from the 168th line—"Jam murmura serpunt plebis Agenoreæ"—to the 312th—"Interea patriis olim vagus exui ab oris"—(between these* two, Statius has a description of the council of the gods, and a speech of Jupiter; which contains a peculiar beauty and majesty; and were left out for no other reason, but because the consequence of this machine appears not till the second book.) The translation goes on from thence to the words "Hic vero ambo-bus rabiem fortuna cruentam," where there is an odd account of a battle at fisty-cuffs between the two princes, on a very slight occasion, and at a time when, one would think, the fatigue of their journey, in so tempestuous a night, might have rendered them very unfit for such a scuffle. This I had actually translated, but was very ill satisfied with it, even in my own words, to which an author cannot but be partial enough of conscience: it was therefore omitted in this copy, which goes on above eighty lines farther, at the words—"Hic primum lustrare oculis," &c. to the end of the book.

You will find, I doubt not, that Statius was none of the discreetest poets, though he was the best versifier next Virgil: in the very beginning he un-

years old, as appears by an advertisement before the first edition of it, in a miscellany published by B. Lintot, 8vo, 1711.

* These he since translated, and they are extant in the printed version.

luckily betrays his ignorance in the rules of Poetry (which Horace had already taught the Romans), when he asks his Muse where to begin his Thebaid, and seems to doubt whether it should not be "ab ovo Ledæo." When he comes to the scene of his poem, and the prize in dispute between the brothers, he gives us a very mean opinion of it—"Pugna est de paupere regno." Very different from the conduct of his master, Virgil, who at the entrance of his poem informs his reader of the greatness of its subject—"Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem" [Bossu on Epic Poetry]. There are innumerable little faults in him; among which I cannot but take notice of one in this book, where speaking of the implacable hatred of the brothers, he says, "the whole world would be too small a prize to repay so much impiety."

*Quid si peteretur crimine tanto
Limes uterque poli, quem Sol emissus Eoo
Cardine, quem porta vergens prospectat Ibera?*

This was pretty well, one would think, already; but he goes on,

*Quasque procul terras obliquo sidere tangit
Avius, aut Borea gelidas, madidive tepentes
Igne Noti?*

After all this, what could a poet think of but Heaven itself for the prize? but what follows is astonishing:

*Quid si Tyriæ Phrygiæve sub unum
Convectentur opes?*

I do not remember to have met with so great a fall in any ancient author whatsoever. I should not have insisted so much on the faults of this poet, if I did not hope you would take the same freedom with, and revenge it upon, his translator. I shall be extremely glad if the reading this can be any amusement to you, the rather because I had the dissatisfaction to hear you have been confined to your chamber by an illness, which, I fear, was as troublesome a companion as I have sometimes been in the same place; where, if ever you found any pleasure in my company, it must surely have been that which most men take in observing the faults and follies of another: a pleasure which, you see, I take care to give you, even in my absence.

If you will oblige me at your leisure

with the confirmation of your recovery, under your own hand, it will be extremely grateful to me; for next to the pleasure of seeing my friends, is that I take in hearing from them: and in this particular I am beyond all acknowledgments obliged to our friend Mr. Wycherley. I know I need no apology to you for speaking of him, whose example, as I am proud of following in all things, so in nothing more than in professing myself, like him; your, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

March 7, 1709.

You had long before this time been troubled with a letter from me, but that I deferred it till I could send you either the Miscellany*, or my continuation of the version of Statius. The first I imagined you might have had before now; but since the contrary has happened, you may draw this moral from it, that authors in general are more ready to write nonsense than booksellers are to publish it. I had I know not what extraordinary flux of rhyme upon me for three days together, in which time all the verses you see added, have been written; which I tell you, that you may more freely be severe upon them. It is a mercy I do not assault you with a number of original sonnets and epigrams, which our modern bards put forth in the spring-time, in as great abundance as trees do blossoms, a very few whereof ever come to be fruit, and please no longer than just in their birth. They make no less haste to bring their flowers of wit to the press, than gardeners to bring their other flowers to the market, which if they cannot get off their hands in the morning are sure to die before night. Thus the same reason that furnishes Covent-garden with those nosegays you so delight in, supplies the Muses, Mercury, and British Apollo (not to say Jacob's Miscellanies) with verses. And it is the happiness of this age, that the modern invention of printing poems for pence a-

piece, has brought the nosegays of Parnassus to bear the same price; whereby the public-spirited Mr. Henry Hills, of Blackfriars, has been the cause of great ease and singular comfort to all the learned, who, never over-abounding in transitory coin, should not be discontented (methinks) even though poems were distributed gratis about the streets, like Bunyan's sermons and other pious treatises; usually published in a like volume and character.

The time now drawing nigh, when you used with Sappho to cross the water in an evening to Spring-garden, I hope you will have a fair opportunity of ravishing her;—I mean only (as Old Fox in the Plain Dealer says) through the ear, with your well-penned verses. I wish you all the pleasure which the season and the nymph can afford; the best company, the best coffee, and the best news you can desire; and what more to wish you than this, I do not know; unless it be a great deal of patience to read and examine the verses I send you: I promise you in return a great deal of deference to your judgment, and an extraordinary obedience to your sentiments for the future (to which you know I have been sometimes a little refractory). If you will please to begin where you left off last, and mark the margin, as you have done in the pages immediately before (which you will find corrected to your sense since your last perusal), you will extremely oblige me and improve my translation. Besides those places which may deviate from the sense of the author, it would be very kind in you to observe any deficiencies in the diction or numbers. The hiatus in particular I would avoid as much as possible, to which you are certainly in the right to be a professed enemy; though I confess, I could not think it possible at all times to be avoided by any writer, till I found by reading Malherbe lately, that there is scarce any throughout his poems. I thought your observation true enough to be passed into a rule, but not a rule without exceptions, nor that it ever had been reduced to practice: but this example of one of the most correct and best of their poets has undeceived me, and confirms your opinion very strongly, and much more than Mr. Dryden's authority, who, though he made it a rule, seldom observed it. Your, &c.

* Jacob Tonson's sixth volume of Poetical Miscellanies, in which Mr. Pope's Pastorals, and some versions of Homer and Chaucer, were first printed.

LETTER XIX.

From the same to the same.

June 10, 1709.

I HAVE received part of the version of Statius, and return you my thanks for your remarks, which I think to be just, except where you cry out (like one in Horace's Art of Poetry) "pulchre, bene, recte!" There I have some fears you are often, if not always, in the wrong.

One of your objections, namely on that passage,

The rest revolving years shall ripen into fate, may be well grounded, in relation to its not being the exact sense of the words—"Certo reliqua ordine ducam*." But the duration of the action of Statius's poem may as well be expected against as many things besides in him (which I wonder Bossu has not observed): for instead of confining his narration to one year, it is manifestly exceeded in the very first two books: the narration begins with Œdipus's prayer to the Fury to promote discord betwixt his sons; afterward the poet expressly describes their entering into the agreement of reiving a year by turns; and Polynices takes his flight from Thebes on his brother's refusal to resign the throne. All this is in the first book: in the next, Tydeus is sent ambassador to Eteocles, and demands his resignation in these terms,

*Astriferum velox jam circulus orbem
Torsit, et amissæ redierunt montibus umbræ,
Ex quo frater inops, ignota per oppida tristes
Exul agit casus.*

But Bossu himself is mistaken in one particular, relating to the commencement of the action; saying in book ii. chap. 8, that Statius opens it with Eupha's rape; whereas the poet at most only deliberates whether he should or not:

*Unde jubebis
Ire, Deæ? gentisne canam primordia diræ,
Sidonios raptus? &c.*

ut then expressly passes all this with a long retro series"—and says,

*Limes mihi carminis esto
Œdipodæ confusa domus.*

indeed there are numberless particulars

blameworthy in our author, which I have tried to soften in the version:

*Dubiamque jugo fragor impulit Œten
In latus, et geminis vix fluctibus obstilit Isthmus*

is most extravagantly hyperbolic: nor did I ever read a greater piece of tautology than

*Vacua cum solus in aula
Respiceres jus omne tuum, cunctosque minores,
Et nusquam par stare caput.*

In the journey of Polynices is some geographical error:

In mediis audit duo litora campis

could hardly be: for the Isthmus of Corinth is full five miles over: and "caligentes abrupto sole Mycenæ," is not consistent with what he tells us, in lib. iv. line 305, "that those of Mycenæ came not to the war at this time, because they were then in confusion by the divisions of the brothers, Atreus and Thyestes." Now from the raising the Greek army against Thebes, back to the time of this journey of Polynices, is (according to Statius's own account) three years. Yours, &c.

LETTER XX.

From the same to the same.

July 17, 1709.

THE morning after I parted from you, I found myself (as I had prophesied) all alone, in an uneasy stage-coach: a doleful change from that agreeable company I enjoyed the night before! without the least hope of entertainment but from my last recourse in such cases, a book. I then began to enter into acquaintance with your moralists, and had just received from them some cold consolation for the inconveniences of this life, and the uncertainty of human affairs: when I perceived my vehicle to stop, and heard from the side of it the dreadful news of a sick woman preparing to enter it. It is not easy to guess at my mortification; but being so well fortified with philosophy, I stood resigned with a stoical constancy to endure the worst of evils, a sick woman. I was a little comforted to find, by her voice and dress, that she was young and a gentlewoman: but no sooner was her hood removed, but I saw one of the finest faces I ever beheld, and

* See the first book of Statius, v. 392.

to increase my surprise, heard her salute me by my name. I never had more reason to accuse nature for making me short-sighted than now, when I could not recollect I had ever seen those fair eyes which knew me so well, and was utterly at a loss how to address myself; till with a great deal of simplicity and innocence she let me know (even before I discovered my ignorance) that she was the daughter of one in our neighbourhood lately married, who, having been consulting her physicians in town, was returning into the country, to try what good air and a husband could do to recover her. My father, you must know, has sometimes recommended the study of physic to me, but I never had any ambition to be a doctor till this instant. I ventured to prescribe some fruit (which I happened to have in the coach) which being forbidden her by her doctors, she had the more inclination to. In short, I tempted, and she ate; nor was I more like the Devil than she like Eve. Having the good success of the foresaid tempter before my eyes, I put on the gallantry of the old serpent, and, in spite of my evil form, accosted her with all the gaiety I was master of; which had so good an effect, that in less than an hour she grew pleasant; her colour returned, and she was pleased to say my prescription had wrought an immediate cure. In a word, I had the pleasantest journey imaginable.

Thus far (methinks) my letter has something of the air of romance, though it be true. But I hope you will look on what follows as the greatest of truths, that I think myself extremely obliged by you in all points; especially for your kind and honourable information and advice in a matter of the utmost concern to me, which I shall ever acknowledge as the highest proof at once of your friendship, justice, and sincerity. At the same time be assured, that gentleman we spoke of shall never, by any alteration in me, discover my knowledge of his mistake; the hearty forgiving of which is the only kind of return I can possibly make him for so many favours: and I may derive this pleasure at least from it, that whereas I must otherwise have been a little uneasy to know my incapacity of returning his obligations, I may now, by bearing his frailty, exercise my gratitude and friendship more than

himself either is, of perhaps ever will be sensible of.

*Ille meos, primus qui me sibi junxit, amores
Abstulit: ille habeat secum, sercetque sepulchro!*

But in one thing, I must confess you have yourself obliged me more than any man; which is, that you have shewed me many of my faults, to which as you are the more an implacable enemy, by so much the more are you a kind friend to me. I could be proud, in revenge, to find a few slips in your verses, which I read in London, and since in the country, with more application and pleasure: the thoughts are very just, and you are sure not to let them suffer by the versification. If you would oblige me with the trust of any thing of yours, I should be glad to execute any commissions you would give me concerning them. I am here so perfectly at leisure, that nothing would be so agreeable an entertainment to me; but if you will not afford me that, do not deny me at least the satisfaction of your letters as long as we are absent, if you would not have him very unhappy, who is very sincerely your, &c.

Having a vacant space here, I will fill it with a short Ode on Solitude, which I found yesterday by great accident, and which I find, by the date, was written when I was not twelve years old; that you may perceive how long I have continued in my passion for a rural life, and in the same employments of it.

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
On his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day.

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mix'd; sweet recreation
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown,
Thus, unlamented, let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

LETTER XXI.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

Aug 19, 1709.

IF I were to write to you as often as I think of you, my letters would be as bad as a rent-charge; but though the one be but too little for your good nature, the other would be but too much for your quiet, which is one blessing good-nature should indispensably receive from mankind in return for those many it gives. I have been informed of late, how much I am indebted to that quality of yours, in speaking well of me in my absence, the only thing by which you prove yourself no wit nor critic; though indeed I have often thought, that a friend will shew just as much indulgence (and no more) to my faults when I am absent, as he does severity to them when I am present. To be very frank with you, sir, I must own, that where I received so much civility at first, I could hardly have expected so much sincerity afterwards. But now I have only to wish, that the past were but equal to the first; and that as you have omitted nothing to oblige me, so you would omit nothing to improve me.

I caused an acquaintance of mine to enquire twice of your welfare, by whom I have been informed, that you have left your speculative angle in the widow's coffee-house, and bidding adieu for some time to all the rehearsals, reviews, gaudes, &c. have marched off into Lincolnshire. Thus I find you vary your life in the scene at least, though not in the action; for though life, for the most part, be an old play, be still the same, yet now and then a new scene may make it more entertaining. As for myself, I could not have my life a very regular play, let it be a good merry farce, a G—d's name, and a fig for the criticalities! For the generality of men, a true modern life is like a true modern play, neither tragedy, comedy, nor farce, but one nor all of these; every actor is much better known by his having the same face, than by keeping the same character; for we change our minds as often as they can their parts; and he who was yesterday Cæsar, is to-day sir John Daw. So that one might ask the same question of a modern life, that Rich did of a modern play: "Pray do

me the favour, sir, to inform me,—Is this your tragedy or your comedy?"

I have dwelt the longer upon this, because I persuade myself it might be useful, at a time when we have no theatre, to divert ourselves at this great one. Here is a glorious standing comedy of fools, at which every man is heartily merry, and thinks himself an unconcerned spectator. This (to our singular comfort) neither my lord chamberlain nor the queen herself, can ever shut up, or silence;—while that of Drury (alas!) lies desolate in the profoundest peace; and the melancholy prospect of the nymphs yet lingering about its beloved avenues, appears no less moving than that of the Trojan dames lamenting over their ruined Ilium? What now can they hope, dispossessed of their ancient seats, but to serve as captives to the insulting victors of the Haymarket? The afflicted subjects of France do not, in our Postman, so grievously deplore the obstinacy of their arbitrary monarch, as these perishing people of Drury, the obdurate heart of that Pharaoh, Rich, who, like him, disdains all proposals of peace and accommodation. Several libels have been secretly affixed to the great gates of his imperial palace in Bridges-street; and a memorial, representing the distresses of these persons, has been accidentally dropt (as we are credibly informed by a person of quality) out of his first minister the chief box-keeper's pocket, at a late conference of the said person of quality and others, on the part of the confederates, and his theatrical majesty on his own part. Of this you may expect a copy, as soon as it shall be transmitted to us from a good hand. As for the late congress, it is here reported, that it has not been wholly ineffectual; but this wants confirmation; yet we cannot but hope the concurring prayers and tears of so many wretched ladies may induce this haughty prince to reason. I am, &c.

LETTER XXII.

From the same to the same

Oct. 19, 1709.

I MAY truly say, I am more obliged to you this summer than to any of my acquaintance; for had it not been for the two kind letters you sent me, I had been perfectly "oblitusque meorum, oblivis-

cehdus et illis." The only companions I had were those Muses, of whom Tully says, "Adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfrugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernecant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur:" which is indeed as much as ever I expected from them; for the Muses, if you take them as companions, are very pleasant and agreeable; but whoever should be forced to live or depend upon them would find himself in a very bad condition. That quiet, which Cowley calls the *Companion of Obscurity*, was not wanting to me, unless it was interrupted by those fears you so justly guess I had for our friend's welfare. It is extremely kind in you to tell me the news you heard of him; and you have delivered me from more anxiety than he imagines me capable of on his account, as I am convinced by his long silence. However, the love of some things rewards itself, as of virtue, and of Mr. Wycherley. I am surprised at the danger you tell me he has been in; and must agree with you that our nation must have lost in him as much wit and probity as would have remained (for aught I know) in the rest of it. My concern for his friendship will excuse me (since I know you honour him so much, and since you know I love him above all men) if I vent a part of my uneasiness to you, and tell you that there has not been wanting one, to insinuate malicious untruths of me to Mr. Wycherley, which, I fear, may have had some effect upon him. If so, he will have a greater punishment for his credulity than I could wish him, in that fellow's acquaintance. The loss of a faithful creature is something, though of ever so contemptible an one; and if I were to change my dog for such a man as the aforesaid, I should think my dog undervalued (who follows me about as constantly here in the country, as I was used to do Mr. Wycherley in the town).

Now I talk of my dog, that I may not treat of a worse subject, which my spleen tempts me to, I will give you some account of him, a thing not wholly unprecedented, since Montaigne (to whom I am but a dog in comparison) has done the same thing of his cat. "Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agam?" You are to know, then, that as it is likeness be-

gets affection, so my favourite dog is a little one, a lean one, and none of the finest shaped. He is not much a spaniel in his fawning, but has (what might be worth any man's while to imitate him in) a dumb surly sort of kindness, that rather shews itself when he thinks me ill used by others, than when we walk quietly and peaceably by ourselves. If it be the chief point of friendship to comply with a friend's motions and inclinations, he possesses this in an eminent degree; he lies down when I sit, and walks when I walk, which is more than many good friends can pretend to: witness our walk a year ago in St. James's Park.—Histories are more full of examples of the fidelity of dogs than of friends; but I will not insist upon many of them, because it is possible some may be almost as fabulous as those of Pylades and Orestes, &c. I will only say, for the honour of dogs, that the two most ancient and esteemed books, sacred and profane, extant (*viz.* the Scripture and Homer) have shewn a particular regard to these animals. That of Toby is the more remarkable, because there seemed no manner of reason to take notice of the dog, besides the great humanity of the author. Homer's account of Ulysses's dog Argus is the most pathetic imaginable, all the circumstances considered, and an excellent proof of the old bard's good nature. Ulysses had left him at Ithaca when he embarked for Troy; and found him at his return after twenty years (which by the way is not unnatural, as some critics have said, since I remember the dam of my dog was twenty-two years old when she died. May the omen of longevity prove fortunate to her successors!) You shall have it in verse:—

ARGUS.

When wise Ulysses, from his native coast
Long kept by wars, and long by tempests tost,
Arriv'd at last, poor, old, disguis'd, alone,
To all his friends, and e'en his queen, unknown:
Chang'd as he was with age, and toils, and cares,
Furrow'd his revere'd face, and white his hairs,
In his own palace forc'd to ask his bread,
Scorn'd by those slaves his former bounty fed,
Forgot of all his own domestic crew:
The faithful dog alone his rightful master knew!
Unfed, unhous'd, neglected on the clay,
Like an old servant now cashier'd, he lay:
Touch'd with resentment of ungrateful man,
And longing to behold his ancient lord again.
Him when he saw—he rose, and crawl'd to meet,
(’Twas all he cou’d) and fawn’d, and kiss’d his feet,

Seiz'd with dumb joy—then falling by his side,
Own'd his returning lord, look'd up, and died!

Plutarch, relating how the Athenians were obliged to abandon Athens in the time of Themistocles, steps back again out of the way of his history, purely to describe the lamentable cries and howlings of the poor dogs they left behind. He makes mention of one, that followed his master across the sea to Salamis, where he died, and was honoured with a tomb by the Athenians, who gave the name of the Dog's Grave to that part of the island where he was buried. This respect to a dog in the most polite people of the world is very observable. A modern instance of gratitude to a dog (though we have but few such) is, that the chief order of Denmark (now injuriously called the order of the Elephant) was instituted in memory of the fidelity of a dog, named *Wild-brat*, to one of their kings, who had been deserted by his subjects; he gave his order this motto, or to this effect (which still remains) *Wild-brat was faithful*. Sir William Trumbull has told me a story, which he heard from one that was present: King Charles I. being with some of his court during his troubles, a discourse arose what sort of dogs deserved pre-eminence; and it being on all hands agreed to belong either to the spaniel or greyhound, the king gave his opinion on the part of the greyhound; because (said he) it has all the good nature of the other without the fawning:—a good piece of satire upon his courtiers, with which I will conclude my discourse of dogs. Call me a cynic, or what you please, in revenge for all this impertinence, I will be contented, provided you will but believe me when I say a bold word for a Christian; that, of all dogs, you will find none more faithful than your, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

April 10, 1710.

I HAD written to you sooner, but that I made of some scruple of sending prophane things to you in Holy Week. Besides, our family would have been scandalized to see me write, who take it for granted I write nothing but ungodly verses. I assure you, I am looked upon in the

neighbourhood for a very well disposed person; no great hunter, indeed, but a great admirer of the noble sport, and only unhappy in my want of constitution for that and drinking. They all say, it is pity I am so sickly; and I think it is pity they are so healthy. But I say nothing that may destroy their good opinion of me. I have not quoted one Latin author since I came down, but have learned without book a song of Mr. Thomas Durfey's, who is your only poet of tolerable reputation in this country. He makes all the merriment in our entertainments; and but for him, there would be so miserable a dearth of catches, that, I fear, they would put either the parson or me upon making some for them. Any man of any quality is heartily welcome to the best toping-table of our gentry, who can roar out for some rhapsodies of his works: so that in the same manner as it was said of Homer to his detractors: What! dares any man speak against him who has given so many men to *eat*? (meaning the rhapsodists who lived by repeating his verses) thus it may be said of Mr. Durfey to his detractors; Dares any one despise him, who has made so many men *drink*? Alas, sir! this is a glory which neither you nor I must ever pretend to. Neither you with your Ovid, nor I with my Statius, can amuse a board of justices and extraordinary 'squires; or gain one hum of approbation, or laugh, or admiration. These things (they would say) are too studious; they may do well enough with such as love reading, but give us your ancient poet Mr. Durfey! It is mortifying enough, it must be confessed; but, however, let us proceed in the way that nature has directed us—"Multi multa sciunt sed nemo omnia," as it is said in the almanac. Let us communicate our works for our mutual comfort: send me elegies, and you shall not want heroics. At present, I have only these arguments in prose to the Thebaid, which you claim by promise, as I do your translation of *Pars me Sulmo tenet*,—and the *Ring*; the rest I hope for as soon as you can conveniently transcribe them; and whatsoever orders you are pleased to give shall be punctually obeyed by your, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

May 10, 1710.

I HAD not so long omitted to express my acknowledgments to you for so much good nature and friendship as you lately shewed me; but that I am but just returned to my own hermitage, from Mr. C.'s, who has done me so many favours, that I am almost inclined to think my friends infect one another, and that your conversation with him has made him as obliging to me as yourself. I can assure you he has a sincere respect for you; and this, I believe, he has partly contracted from me, who am too full of you not to overflow upon those I converse with. But I must now be contented to converse only with the dead of this world, that is to say, the dull and obscure, every way obscure, in their intellects as well as their persons: or else have recourse to the living dead, the old authors with whom you are so well acquainted, even from Virgil down to Aulus Gellius, whom I do not think a critic by any means to be compared to Mr. Dennis; and I must declare positively to you, that I will persist in this opinion till you become a little more civil to Atticus. Who could have imagined that he, who had escaped all the misfortunes of his time, unhurt even by the proscriptions of Antony and Augustus, should in these days find an enemy more severe and barbarous than those tyrants? and that enemy the gentlest too, the best-natured of mortals, Mr. Cromwell, whom I must in this compare once more to Augustus; who seemed not more unlike himself, in the severity of one part of his life and the clemency of the other, than you. I leave you to reflect on this, and hope that time (which mollifies rocks, and of stiff things makes limber) will turn a resolute critic to a gentle reader; and instead of this positive, tremendous new-fashioned Mr. Cromwell, restore unto us our old acquaintance, the soft, beneficent, and courteous Mr. Cromwell.

I expect much, towards the civilising of you in your critical capacity, from the innocent air and tranquillity of our forest, when you do me the favour to visit it. In the mean time, it would do well, by way of preparative, if you

would duly and constantly every morning read over a pastoral of Theocritus or Virgil; and let the lady Isabella put your Macrobius and Aulus Gellius somewhere out of your way, for a month or so. Who knows but travelling and long airing in an open field may contribute more successfully to the cooling a critic's severity, than it did to the assuaging of Mr. Chee's anger of old? In these fields you will be secure of finding no enemy, but the most faithful and affectionate of your friends, &c.

LETTER XXV.

From the same to the same.

May 17, 1710.

AFTER I had recovered from a dangerous illness, which was first contracted in town about a fortnight after my coming hither, I troubled you with a letter, and paper inclosed*, which you had been so obliging as to desire a sight of when last I saw you; promising me in return some translations of yours from Ovid. Since when, I have not had a syllable from your hands; so that it is to be feared, that though I have escaped death, I have not oblivion. I should at least have expected you to have finished that elegy upon me, which you told me you were upon the point of beginning when I was sick in London: if you will do so much for me first, I will give you leave to forget me afterwards; and for my own part will die at discretion, and at my leisure. But I fear I must be forced, like many learned authors, to write my own epitaph, if I would be remembered at all. Monsieur de la Fontaine's would fit me to a hair; but it is a kind of sacrilege (do you think it is not?) to steal epitaphs. In my present living, dead condition, nothing would be properer than "*Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis,*" but that unluckily I cannot forget my friends, and the civilities I received from yourself and some others. They say indeed it is one quality of generous minds to forget the obligations they have conferred, and perhaps too it may be so to forget those on whom they conferred them; then indeed I must be forgotten to all intents

* Verses on Silence, in imitation of the earl of Rochester's poem on Nothing, done at fourteen years old.

and purposes ; I am, it must be owned, dead in a natural capacity, according to Mr. Bickerstaff ; dead in a poetical capacity, as a damned author ; and dead in a civil capacity, as a useless member of the commonwealth. But reflect, dear sir, what melancholy effects may ensue, if dead men are not civil to one another ! if he who has nothing to do himself, will not comfort and support another in his idleness ; if those, who are to die themselves, will not now and then pay the charity of visiting a tomb and a dead friend, and strewing a few flowers over him. In the shades where I am, the inhabitants have a mutual compassion for each other ; being all alike *Inanes* ; we saunter to one another's habitation, and daily assist each other in doing nothing at all. This I mention for your edification and example, that, all alive as you are, you may not sometimes disdain — *desipere in loco*. Though you are no papist, and have not so much regard to the dead as to address yourself to them (which I plainly perceive by your silence) yet I hope you are not one of those heterodox, who hold them to be totally insensible of the good offices and kind wishes of their living friends, and to be in a dull state of sleep, without one dream of those they left behind them. If you are, let this letter convince you to the contrary, which assures you I am still, though in a state of separation, yours, &c.

P. S. This letter of deaths puts me in mind of poor Mr. Betterton's ; over whom I would have this sentence of Tully for an epitaph, which will serve him as well in his moral, as his theatrical capacity :

Vitæ bene actæ jucundissima est recordatio.

LETTER XXVI.

From the same to the same.

June 24, 1710.

It is very natural for a young friend, and a young lover, to think the persons they love have nothing to do but to please them : when perhaps they, for their parts, had twenty other engagements before. This was my case, when I wondered I did not hear from you ; but I no sooner received your short letter, but I forgot your long silence ; and so

many fine things as you said of me could not but have wrought a cure on my own sickness, if it had not been of the nature of that which is deaf to the voice of the charmer. It was impossible you could have better timed your compliment on my philosophy ; it was certainly properest to commend me for it just when I most needed it, and when I could least be proud of it ; that is, when I was in pain. It is not easy to express what an exaltation it gave to my spirits, above all the cordials of my doctor ; and it is no compliment to tell you, that your compliments were sweeter than the sweetest of his juleps and syrups. But if you will not believe so much,

*Pour le moins, votre compliment
M'a soulagé dans ce moment ;
Et des qu'on me l'est venu faire
J'ai chassé mon apoticaire,
Et renvoyé mon lavement.*

Nevertheless, I would not have you entirely lay aside the thoughts of my epitaph, any more than I do those of the probability of my becoming (ere long) the subject of one ; for death has of late been very familiar with some of my size. I am told, my lord Lumley and Mr. Litton are gone before me ; and though I may now, without vanity, esteem myself the least thing like a man in England, yet I cannot but be sorry, two heroes of such a make should die inglorious in their beds ; when it had been a fate more worthy our size, had they met with theirs from an irruption of cranes, or other warlike animals, those ancient enemies to our pygmean ancestors. You of a superior species little regard what befalls us *homunciones sesquipedales* ; however, you have no reason to be so unconcerned, since all physicians agree there is no greater sign of a plague among men than a mortality among frogs.

This sort of writing, called a Rondeau, is what I never knew practised in our nation ; and, I verily believe, it was not in use with the Greeks or Romans, neither Macrobius nor Hyginus taking the least notice of it. It is to be observed, that the vulgar spelling and pronouncing it Round O, is a manifest corruption, and by no means to be allowed of by critics. Some may mistakenly imagine that it was a sort of rondeau which the Gallic soldiers sang in Cæsar's triumphs over Gaul — *Gallias Cæsar subegit*, &c. as it is recorded by Suetonius in Julio, and so

derive its original from the ancient Gauls to the modern French; but this is erroneous; the words there not being ranged according to the laws of the rondeau, as laid down by Clement Marot. If you will say, that the song of the soldiers might be only the rude beginning of this kind of poem, and so consequently imperfect, neither Heinsius nor I can be of that opinion; and so I conclude, that we know nothing of the matter.

But, sir, I ask your pardon for all this buffoonery, which I could not address to any one so well as to you, since I have found by experience, that you most easily forgive my impertinencies. It is only to shew you that I am mindful of you at all times, that I write at all times; and as nothing I can say can be worth your reading, so I may as well throw out what comes uppermost, as study to be dull. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell Esq.

July 20, 1710.

I GIVE you thanks for the version you sent me of Ovid's Elegy. It is very much an image of that author's writing, who has an agreeableness that charms us without correctness; like a mistress, whose faults we see, but love her with them all. You have very judiciously altered his method in some places; and I can find nothing which I dare insist upon as an error; what I have written in the margins being merely guesses at a little improvement, rather than criticisms. I assure you I do not expect you should subscribe to my private notions but when you shall judge them agreeable to reason and good sense. What I have done is not as a critic but as a friend; I know too well how many qualities are requisite to make the one, and that I want almost all I can reckon up; but I am sure I do not want inclination, nor, I hope, capacity to be the other. Nor shall I take it at all amiss that another dissents from my opinion; it is no more than I have often done from my own; and indeed, the more a man advances in understanding, he becomes the more every day a critic upon himself, and finds something or other still to blame in his former notions and opinions. I could be glad to know if you have translated the 11th

elegy of lib. ii. *Ad amicam navigantem*; the 8th of book iii. or the 11th of book iii. which are above all others my particular favourites, especially the last of these.

As to the passage of which you ask my opinion in the second Æneid, it is either so plain as to require no solution, or else (which is very probable) you see farther into it than I can. Priam would say that, "Achilles (whom surely you only feign to be your father, since your actions are so different from his) did not use me thus inhumanly. He blushed at his murder of Hector, when he saw my sorrows for him; and restored his dead body to me to be buried." To this the answer of Pyrrhus seems to be agreeable enough, "Go then to the shades, and tell Achilles how I degenerate from him;" granting the truth of what Priam had said of the difference between them. Indeed Mr. Dryden's mentioning here what Virgil more judiciously passes in silence, the circumstance of Achilles's selling for money the body of Hector, seems not so proper; it is in some measure lessening the character of Achilles's generosity and piety, which is the very point of which Priam endeavours in this place to convince his son, and to reproach him with the want of. But the truth of this circumstance is no way to be questioned, being expressly taken from Homer, who represents Achilles weeping for Priam, yet receiving the gold (Iliad xxiv.); for when he gives the body, he uses these words: "O my friend Patroclus, forgive me that I quit the corpse of him who killed thee! I have great gifts in ransom for it, which I will bestow upon thy funeral." I am, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

From the same to the same.

August 21, 1710.

Your letters are a perfect clarity to a man in retirement, utterly forgotten of all his friends but you; for since Mr. Wycherley left London, I have not heard a word from him; though just before, and once since, I writ to him, and though I know myself guilty of no offence but of doing sincerely just what he bid me: "*Hoc mihi libertas, hoc pia lingua dedit!*" But the greatest injury he

does me, is the keeping me in ignorance of his welfare; which I am always very solicitous for, and very uneasy in the fear of any indisposition that may befall him. In what I sent you some time ago, you have not verse enough to be severe upon, in revenge for my last criticism: in one point I must persist, that is to say, my dislike of your *Paradise*, in which I take no pleasure: I know very well, that in Greek it is not only used by Xenophon, but is a common word for any garden; but in English, it bears the signification and conveys the idea of Eden, which alone is (I think) a reason against making Ovid use it; who will be thought to talk too much like a Christian in your version at least, whatever it might have been in Latin or Greek. As for all the rest of my remarks, since you do not laugh at them as at this, I can be so civil as not to lay any stress upon them (as, I think, I told you before); and in particular in the point of trees enjoying, you have, I must own, fully satisfied me that the expression is not only defensible, but beautiful. I shall be very glad to see your translation of the elegy, *Ad amicam navigantem*, as soon as you can; for (without a compliment to you) every thing you write, either in verse or prose, is welcome to me; and you may be confident (if my opinion can be of any sort of consequence in any thing) that I will never be unsincere, though I may be often mistaken. To use sincerity with you, is but paying you in your own coin, from whom I have experienced so much of it; and I need not tell you, how much I really esteem you, when I esteem nothing in the world so much as that quality. I know you sometimes say civil things to me in your epistolary style; but those I am to make allowance for, as particularly when you talk of admiring: it is a word you are so used to in conversation of ladies, that it will creep into your discourse, in spite of you, even to your friends: but as women, when they think themselves secure of admiration, commit a thousand negligences, which shew them so much at disadvantage and off their guard, as to lose the little real love they had before: so when men imagine others entertain some esteem for their abilities, they often expose all their imperfections and foolish works to the disparagement of the little wit they were thought masters

of. I am going to exemplify this to you, in putting into your hands (being encouraged by so much indulgence) some verses of my youth, or rather childhood; which (as I was a great admirer of Waller) were intended in imitation of his manner; and are, perhaps, such imitations as those you see in awkward country dames, of the fine and well-bred ladies of the court. If you will take them with you into Lincolnshire, they may save you one hour from the conversation of the country gentlemen and their tenants (who differ but in dress and name), which, if it be there as bad as here, is even worse than my poetry. I hope your stay there will be no longer than (as Mr. Wycherley calls it) to rob the country, and run away to London with your money. In the mean time, I beg the favour of a line from you; and am (as I will never cease to be) your, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

From the same to the same.

October 12, 1710.

I DEFERRED answering your last, upon the advice I received, that you were leaving the town for some time, and expected your return with impatience, having then a design of seeing my friends there; among the first of which I have reason to account yourself. But my almost continual illnesses prevent that, as well as most other satisfactions of my life. However, I may say one good thing of sickness, that it is the best cure in nature for ambition, and designs upon the world or fortune: it makes a man pretty indifferent for the future, provided he can but be easy, by intervals, for the present. He will be content to compound for his quiet only, and leave all the circumstantial part and pomp of life to those who have a health vigorous enough to enjoy all the mistresses of their desires. I thank God, there is nothing out of myself which I would be at the trouble of seeking, except a friend; a happiness I once hoped to have possessed in Mr. Wycherley; but, *Quantum mutatus ab illo!*—I have for some years been employed much like children that build houses with cards, endeavouring very busily and eagerly to raise a friendship, which the first breath

of any ill-natured by-stander could puff away.—But I will trouble you no farther with writing, nor myself with thinking of this subject.

I was mightily pleased to perceive, by your quotation from Voiture, that you had tracked me so far as France. You see it is with weak heads as with weak stomachs, they immediately throw out what they received last: and what they read, floats upon the surface of the mind, like oil upon water, without incorporating. This, I think, however, cannot be said of the love-verses I last quoted you with, where all (I am afraid) is so puerile and so like the author, that nobody will suspect any thing to be borrowed. Yet you (as a friend, entertaining a better opinion of them), it seems, searched in Waller, but searched in vain. Your judgment of them is (I think) very right,—for it was my own opinion before. If you think them not worth the trouble of correcting, pray tell me so freely, and it will save me a labour; if you think the contrary, you would particularly oblige me by your remarks on the several thoughts as they occur. I long to be nibbling at your verses; and have not forgot who promised me Ovid's elegy, *Ad amicam navigantem*. Had Ovid been as long in composing it, as you in sending it, the lady might have sailed to Gades, and received it at her return. I have really a great itch of criticism upon me, but want matter here in the country; which I desire you to furnish me with, as I do you in the town;

Sic seruat studii fœdera quisque sui.

I am obliged to Mr. Caryl (whom you tell me you met at Epsom) for telling you truth, as a man is in these days to any one that will tell truth to his advantage; and I think none is more to mine than what he told you; and I should be glad to tell all the world, that I have an extreme affection and esteem for you.

*Tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles,
Et tecum primas epulis decernere noctes;
Unum opus et requiem pariter disponimus ambo,
Atque verecunda laxamus seria mensa.*

By these *epulae*, as I take it, Persius meant the Portugal snuff and burnt claret, which he took with his master Cornutus; and the *verecunda mensa* was,

without dispute, some coffee-house table of the ancients. I will only observe, that these four lines are as elegant and musical as any in Persius, not excepting those six or seven which Mr. Dryden quotes as the only such in all that author. I could be heartily glad to repeat the satisfaction described in them, being truly your, &c.

LETTER XXX.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

October 28th, 1710.

I AM glad to find by your last letter, that you write to me with the freedom of a friend, setting down your thoughts as they occur, and dealing plainly with me in the matter of my own trifles, which, I assure you, I never valued half so much as I do that sincerity in you which they were the occasion of discovering to me; and which, while I am happy in, I may be trusted with that dangerous weapon, Poetry, since I shall do nothing with it, but after asking and following your advice. I value sincerity the more, as I find, by sad experience, the practice of it is more dangerous; writers rarely pardoning the executioners of their verses, even though themselves pronounce sentence upon them.—As to Mr. Phillips's Pastorals, I take the first to be infinitely the best, and the second the worst; the third is, for the greatest part, a translation from Virgil's *Daphnis*. I will not forestal your judgment of the rest, only observe in that of the Nightingale these lines (speaking of the musician's playing on the harp):

Now lightly skimming o'er the strings they pass,
Like winds that gently brush the plying grass,
And melting airs arise at their command;
And now, laborious, with a weighty hand,
He sinks into the cords with solemn pace,
And gives the swelling tones a manly grace.

To which nothing can be objected, but that they are too lofty for pastoral, especially being put into the mouth of a shepherd, as they are here: in the poet's own person they had been (I believe) more proper. They are more after Virgil's manner than that of Theocritus, whom yet in the character of pastoral he rather seems to imitate. In the whole, I agree with the Tatler, that we have no better Eclogues in our language. There is a small copy of the same au-

thor published in the Tatler, No. 12, on the Danish winter; it is poetical painting, and I recommend it to your perusal.

Dr. Garth's poem I have not seen, but believe I shall be of that critic's opinion you mention at Will's, who swore it was good: for, though I am very cautious of swearing after critics, yet I think one may do it more safely when they commend, than when they blame.

I agree with you in your censure of the use of the sea-terms in Mr. Dryden's Virgil; not only because Helenus was no great prophet in those matters, but because no terms of art or cant words suit with the majesty and dignity of style, which epic poetry requires—"Cui mens divini-
or, atque os magnas onaturum." The tarpaulin phrase can please none but such "qui aurem habent Batavam;" they must not expect "auribus Atticis probari," I find by you. (I think I have brought in two phrases of Martial here very dexterously.)

Though you say you did not rightly take my meaning in the verse I quoted from Juvenal, yet I will not explain it, because, though it seems you are resolved to take me for a critic, I would by no means be thought a commentator.—And for another reason too, because I have quite forgot both the verse and the application.

I hope it will be no offence to give my most hearty service to Mr. Wycherley, though I perceive by his last to me, I am not to trouble him with my letters, since he there told me he was going instantly out of town; and till his return he was my servant, &c. I guess by yours he is yet with you, and beg you to do what you may with all truth and honour; that is, assure him I have ever borne all the respect and kindness imaginable to him. I do not know to this hour what it is that has estranged him from me; but this I know, that he may for the future be more safely my friend, since no invitation of his shall ever more make me so free with him. I could not have thought any man so very cautious and suspicious, as not to credit his own experience of a friend. Indeed, to believe nobody, may be a maxim of safety; but not so much of honesty. There is but one way I know of conversing safely with all men, that is, not by concealing what we say or do, but by saying, or doing nothing that deserves to be concealed; and I can truly boast this

comfort in my affairs with Mr. Wycherley. But I pardon his jealousy, which is become his nature, and shall never be his enemy whatsoever he says of me. Your, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 11, 1710.

You mistake me very much in thinking the freedom you kindly used with my love-verses gave me the first opinion of your sincerity: I assure you it only did what every good-natured action of yours has done since, confirmed me more in that opinion. The fable of the Nightingale in Phillips's Pastorals, is taken from Famianus Strada's Latin poem on the same subject, in his *Prolusiones Academicæ*; only the tomb he erects at the end is added from Virgil's conclusion of the *Culex*. I cannot forbear giving you a passage out of the Latin poem I mention; by which you will find the English poet is indebted to it.

*Alternat mira arte fides: dum torquet aculas,
Incitque, graves operoso verberare pulsat.
Jamque manu per fila volat; simul hos, simul illos
Explorat numeros, chordaque laborat in omni—
Mor silet. Illa modis totidem respondet, et artem
Arte refert. Nunc seu rudis, aut incerta canendi,
Præbet iter liquidum labenti e pectore voci,
Nunc casum variat, modulisque canora minutis
Deliberat vocem, tremuloque reciprocet ore.*

This poem was many years since imitated by Crashaw; out of whose verses the following are very remarkable:

From this to that, from that to this it flies,
Feels music's pulse in all its arteries;
Caught in a net which there Apollo spreads,
His fingers struggle with the vocal threads.

I have (as I think I formerly told you) a very good opinion of Mr. Rowe's sixth book of Lucan; indeed he amplifies too much, as well as Brebœuf, the famous French imitator. If I remember right, he sometimes takes the whole comment into the text of the version, as particularly in lin. 808. "Utque solet pariter totis se effundere signis Corycii pressura croci." And in the place you quote, he makes of those two lines in the Latin,

*Vidit quanta sub nocte jaceret
Nostra dies, risitque sui ludibria trunci.*

no less than eight in the English.

What you observe, sure, cannot be an error-sphæricus, strictly speaking, ei-

ther according to the Ptolemaic, or our Copernican system; Tycho Brahe himself will be on the translator's side: for Mr. Rowe here says no more than that he looked down on the rays of the sun, which Pompey might do, even though the body of the sun were above him.

You cannot but have remarked what a journey Lucan here makes Cato take for the sake of his fine descriptions. From Cyrene he travels by land, for no better reason than this;

Hæc eadem suadebat hiems, quæ clauserat æquor.

The winter's effects on the sea, it seems, were more to be dreaded than all the serpents, whirlwinds, sands, &c. by land; which immediately after he paints out in his speech to the soldiers; then he fetches a compass a vast way round about, to the Nassamones and Jupiter Ammon's temple, purely to ridicule the oracles; and Labienus must pardon me, if I do not believe him when he says, "Sors obtulit, et fortuna via"—either Labienus, or the map, is very much mistaken here. Thence he returns back to the Syrtes (which he might have taken first in his way to Utica); and so to Leptis Minor, where our author leaves him: who seems to have made Cato speak his own mind, when he tells his army—"Ire sat est"—no matter whither. I am your, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

Nov. 24, 1710.

To make use of that freedom and familiarity of style which we have taken up in our correspondence, and which is more properly talking upon paper, than writing;—I will tell you, without any preface, that I never took Tycho Brahe for one of the ancients, or in the least an acquaintance of Lucan's; nay, it is a mercy on this occasion that I do not give you an account of his life and conversation; as how he lived some years like an enchanted knight in a certain island, with a tale of a king of Denmark's mistress that shall be nameless. But I have compassion on you, and would not for the world you should stay any longer among the Genii and Semidei Manes, you know where; for if once you get so near the moon, Sappho will

want your presence in the clouds and inferior regions; not to mention the great loss Drury-lane will sustain when Mr. C—— is in the milky-way. These celestial thoughts put me in mind of the priests you mention, who are a sort of Sortilegi in one sense, because in their lottery there are more blanks than prizes; the adventurers being at best in an uncertainty, whereas the setters up are sure of something. Priests indeed in their character, as they represent God, are sacred; and so are constables as they represent the king; but you will own a great many of them are very odd fellows, and the devil of any likeness in them. Yet I can assure you, I honour the good as much as I detest the bad; and I think that in condemning these we praise those. The translations from Ovid I have not so good an opinion of as you; because I think they have little of the main characteristic of this author, a graceful easiness. For let the sense be ever so exactly rendered, unless an author looks like himself in his air, habit, and manner, it is a disguise, and not a translation. But as to the Psalm, I think David is much more beholden to the translator than Ovid; and as he treated the Roman like a Jew, so he has made the Jew speak like a Roman.—Your, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 17, 1710.

It seems that my late mention of Crasshaw, and my quotation from him, has moved your curiosity. I therefore send you the whole author, who has held a place among my other books of this nature for some years; in which time having read him twice or thrice, I find him one of those whose works may just deserve reading. I take this poet to have writ like a gentleman, that is, at leisure hours, and more to keep out of idleness than to establish a reputation: so that nothing regular or just can be expected from him. All that regards design, form, fable (which is the soul of poetry); all that concerns exactness, or consent of parts (which is the body) will probably be wanting: only pretty conceptions, fine metaphors, glittering expressions, and something of a neat cast of

verse (which are properly the dress, gems, or loose ornaments of poetry) may be found in these verses. This is indeed the case of most other poetical writers of miscellanies; nor can it be well otherwise, since no man can be a true poet who writes for diversion only. These authors should be considered as versifiers and witty men, rather than as poets; and under this head will only fall the thoughts, the expression, and the numbers. These are only the pleasing parts of poetry, which may be judged of at a view, and comprehended all at once. And (to express myself like a painter) their colouring entertains the sight; but the lines and life of the picture are not to be inspected too narrowly.

This author formed himself upon Petrarch, or rather upon Marino. His thoughts one may observe, in the main, are pretty; but oftentimes far fetched, and too often strained and stiffened to make them appear the greater. For men are never so apt to think a thing great, as when it is odd or wonderful; and inconsiderate authors would rather be admired than understood. This ambition of surprising a reader is the true natural cause of all fustian and bombast in poetry. To confirm what I have said, you need but look into his first poem of the Weeper, where the 2d, 4th, 6th, 14th, 21st stanzas are as sublimely dull as the 7th, 8th, 9th, 16th, 17th, 20th, and 23d stanzas of the same copy are soft and pleasing; and if these last want any thing, it is an easier and more unaffected expression. The remaining thoughts in that poem might have been spared, being either but repetitions, or very trivial and mean. And by this example in the first, one may guess at all the rest; to be like this, a mixture of tender, gentle thoughts, and suitable expressions, of forced and inextricable conceits, and of needless fillers-up to the rest. From all which it is plain, this author writ fast, and set down what came uppermost. A reader may skim off the froth, and use the clear underneath; but if he goes too deep will meet with a mouthful of dregs; either the top or bottom of him are good for little; but what he did in his own natural, middle way is best.

To speak of his numbers is a little difficult, they are so various and irregu-

lar, and mostly Pindaric. It is evident his heroic verse (the best example of which is his *Music's Duel*), is carelessly made up; but one may imagine from what it now is, that had he taken more care, it had been musical and pleasing enough; not extremely majestic, but sweet; and, the time considered of his writing, he was (even as uncorrect as he is), none of the worst versificators.

I will just observe, that the best pieces of this author are a Paraphrase on Psal. xxiii, on Lessius, Epitaph on Mr. Ash-ton, Wishes to his supposed Mistress, and the *Dies Iræ*.

LETTER XXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 30, 1710.

I RESUME my old liberty of throwing out myself upon paper to you, and making what thoughts float uppermost in my head the subject of a letter. They are at present upon laughter, which (for aught I know) may be the cause you might sometimes think me too remiss a friend, when I was most entirely so; for I am never so inclined to mirth as when I am most pleased and most easy, which is in the company of a friend like yourself.

As the fooling and toying with a mistress is a proof of fondness, not disrespect, so is raillery with a friend. I know there are prudes in friendship, who expect distance, awe, and adoration; but I know you are not of them; and I for my part am no idol-worshipper, though a papist. If I were to address Jupiter himself, in a heathen way, I fancy I should be apt to take hold of his knee in a familiar manner, if not of his beard, like Dionysius; I was just going to say of his buttons; but I think Jupiter wore none (however I won't be positive to so nice a critic as you, but his robe might be subnected with a fibula). I know some philosophers define laughter, a recommending ourselves to our own favour, by comparison with the weakness of another: but I am sure I very rarely laugh with that view, nor do I believe children have any such considerations in their heads, when they express their pleasure this way. I laugh full as innocently as they, for the most part, and as sillily. There is a dif-

ference too betwixt laughing about a thing and laughing at a thing: one may find the inferior man (to make a kind of casuistical distinction) provoked to folly at the sight or observation of some circumstance of a thing, when the thing itself appears solemn and august to the superior man, that is, our judgment and reason. Let an ambassador speak the best sense in the world, and deport himself in the most graceful manner before a prince; yet if the tail of his shirt happen (as I have known it happen to a very wise man) to hang out behind, more people will laugh at that than attend to the other: till they recollect themselves, and then they will not have a jot the less respect for the minister. I must confess the iniquity of my countenance before you; several muscles of my face sometimes take an impertinent liberty with my judgment; but then my judgment soon rises, and sets all right again about my mouth: and I find I value no man so much as him in whose sight I have been playing the fool. I cannot be *sub persona* before a man I love; and not to laugh with honesty, when nature prompts or folly (which is more a second nature than any thing I know), is but a knavish hypocritical way of making a mask of one's own face. To conclude: those that are my friends I laugh with, and those that are not I laugh at; so am merry in company; and if ever I am wise, it is all by myself. You take just another course, and to those that are not your friends are very civil; and to those that are very endearing and complaisant: thus when you and I meet, there will be the *risus et blanditiæ* united together in conversation, as they commonly are in a verse. But without laughter on the one side, or compliment on the other, I assure you I am, with real esteem, your, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. Pope to H. Cromwell, Esq.

Nov. 12, 1711.

I RECEIVED the entertainment of your letter the day after I had sent you one of mine, and I am but this morning returned hither. The news you tell me of the many difficulties you found in your return from Bath, gives me such a

kind of pleasure as we usually take in accompanying our friends in their mixed adventures; for, methinks, I see you labouring through all your inconveniences of the rough roads, the hard saddle, the trotting horse, and what not! What an agreeable surprise would it have been to me, to have met you by pure accident (which I was within an ace of doing), and to have carried you off triumphantly, set you on an easier pad, and relieved the wandering knight with a night's lodging and rural repast, at our castle in the forest! But these are only the pleasing imaginations of a disappointed lover, who must suffer in a melancholy absence yet these two months. In the mean time, I take up with the Muses for want of your better company; the Muses, "*quæ nobiscum pernoctant, peregrinantur, rusticantur.*" Those aerial ladies just discover enough to me of their beauties to urge my pursuit, and draw me into a wandering maze of thought, still in hopes (and only in hopes) of attaining those favours from them which they confer on their more happy admirers. We grasp some more beautiful idea in our own brain than our endeavours to express it can set to the view of others; and still do but labour to fall short of our first imagination. The gay colouring, which fancy gave at the first transient glance we had of it, goes off in the execution, like those various figures in the gilded clouds, which, while we gaze long upon, to separate the parts of each imaginary image, the whole faints before the eye, and decays into confusion.

I am highly pleased with the knowledge you give me of Mr. Wycherley's present temper, which seems so favourable to me. I shall ever have such a fund of affection for him as to be agreeable to myself when I am so to him, and cannot but be gay when he is in good humour, as the surface of the earth (if you will pardon a poetical similitude) is clearer or gloomier, just as the sun is brighter or more overcast.—I should be glad to see the verses to Lintot which you mention; for, methinks, something oddly agreeable may be produced from that subject.—For what remains, I am so well, that nothing but the assurance of you being so can make me better; and if you would have me live with any sa-

tisfaction these dark days in which I cannot see you, it must be your writing sometimes to your, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 21, 1711.

IF I have not writ to you so soon as I ought, let my writing now atone for the delay, as it will infallibly do, when you know what a sacrifice I make you at this time, and that every moment my eyes are employed upon this paper, they are taken off from two of the finest faces in the universe. But indeed it is some consolation to me to reflect, that while I but write this period I escape some hundred fatal darts from those unerring eyes, and about a thousand deaths or better. Now, you that delight in dying, would not once have dreamt of an absent friend in these circumstances; you that are so nice an admirer of beauty, or (as a critic would say after Terence) so elegant a spectator of forms; you must have a sober dish of coffee, and a solitary candle at your side, to write an epistle lucubratory to your friend; whereas I can do it as well with two pair of radiant lights, that outshine the golden god of day and silver goddess of night, and all the refulgent eyes of the firmament. You fancy now that Sappho's eyes are two of these my tapers; but it is no such matter; these are eyes that have much more persuasion in one glance than all Sappho's oratory and gesture together, let her put her body into what moving postures she pleases. Indeed, indeed, my friend, you never could have found so improper a time to tempt me with interest or ambition; let me but have the reputation of these in my keeping, and as for my own, let the devil, or let Dennis, take it for ever. How gladly would I give all I am worth, that is to say, my Pastorals, for one of them, and my Essay for the other! I would lay out all my poetry in love; an original for a lady, and a translation for a waiting-maid! Alas! what have I to do with Jane Gray, as long as miss Molly, miss Betty, or miss Patty, are in this world? Shall I write of beauties murdered long ago, when there are those at this instant that murder me? I will e'en compose my own tragedy, and the

poet shall appear in his own person to move compassion: it will be far more effectual than Bays's entering with a rope about his neck; and the world will own there never was a more miserable object brought upon the stage.

Now you that are a critic, pray inform me in what manner I may connect the foregoing part of this letter with that which is to follow, according to the rules. I would willingly return Mr. Gay my thanks for the favour of his poem, and in particular for his kind mention of me; I hoped, when I heard a new comedy had met with success upon the stage, that it had been his, to which I really wish no less; and (had it been any way in my power) should have been very glad to have contributed to its introduction into the world. His verses to Lintot* have put a whim into my head, which you are like to be troubled with in the opposite page: take it as you find it, the production of half an hour the other morning. I design very soon to put a task of a more serious nature upon you, in reviewing a piece of mine that may better deserve criticism; and by that time you have done with it, I hope to tell you in person with how much fidelity I am your, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. Pope to Sir William Trumbull†.

March 12, 1713.

THOUGH any thing you write is sure to be a pleasure to me, yet I must own, your last letter made me uneasy: you really use a style of compliment, which I expect as little as I deserve it. I know it is a common opinion, that a young scribbler is as ill-pleased to hear truth as a young lady. From the moment one sets up for an author, one must be treated as ceremoniously, that is, as unfaithfully,

As a king's favourite, or as a king.

This proceeding, joined to that natural vanity which first makes a man an author, is certainly enough to render him a coxcomb for life. But I must grant it

* These verses are printed in Dr. Swift's and Pope's Miscellanies.

† Secretary of state to king William the Third.

is a just judgment upon poets, that they whose chief pretence is wit, should be treated as they themselves treat fools ; this is, be cajoled with praises. And I believe, poets are the only poor fellows in the world whom any body will flatter.

I would not be thought to say this, as if the obliging letter you sent me deserved this imputation, only it put me in mind of it ; and I fancy one may apply to one's friend what Cæsar said of his wife : " It was not sufficient that he knew her to be chaste himself ; but she should not be so much as suspected."

As to the wonderful discoveries, and all the good news you are pleased to tell me of myself, I treat it, as you who are in the secret treat common news, as groundless reports of things at a distance : which I, who look into the true springs of the affair, in my own breast, know to have no foundation at all ; for fame, though it be (as Milton finely calls it) the last infirmity of noble minds, is scarce so strong a temptation as to warrant our loss of time here : it can never make us lie down contentedly on a death-bed (as some of the ancients are said to have done with that thought). You, sir, have yourself taught me, that an easy situation at that hour can proceed from no ambition less noble than that of an eternal felicity, which is unattainable by the strongest endeavours of the wit, but may be gained by the sincere intentions of the heart only. As in the next world, so in this, the only solid blessings are owing to the goodness of the mind, not the extent of the capacity : friendship here is an emanation from the same source as beatitude there : the same benevolence and grateful disposition that qualifies us for the one, if extended farther, makes us partakers of the other. The utmost point of my desires, in my present state, terminates in the society and good will of worthy men, which I look upon as no ill earnest and foretaste of the society and alliance of happy souls hereafter.

The continuance of your favours to me is what not only makes me happy, but causes me to set some value upon myself as a part of your care. The instances I daily meet with of these agreeable awakenings of friendship are of too

pleasing a nature not to be acknowledged whenever I think of you. I am your, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. Pope to Sir William Trumbull.

April 30, 1713.

I HAVE been almost every day employed in following your advice, and amusing myself in painting ; in which I am most particularly obliged to Mr. Jervas, who gives me daily instructions and examples. As to poetical affairs, I am content at present to be a bare looker-on, and from a practitioner turn an admirer ; which is (as the world goes) not very usual. Cato was not so much the wonder of Rome in his days, as he is of Britain in ours ; and though all the foolish industry possible has been used to make it thought a party play, yet what the author once said of another, may the most properly in the world be applied to him on this occasion :

Envy itself is dumb, in wonder lost,
And factions strive who shall applaud him
most.

The numerous and violent claps of the whig party on the one side of the theatre, were echoed back by the Tories on the other ; while the author sweated behind the scenes with concern to find the applause proceeding more from the hand than the head. This was the case too of the prologue-writer*, who was clapped into a staunch whig, at almost every two lines. I believe you have heard, that, after all the applauses of the opposite faction, my lord Bolingbroke sent for Booth, who played Cato, into the box, between one of the acts, and presented him with fifty guineas ; in acknowledgment (as he expressed it) for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator. The Whigs are unwilling to be distanced this way, and therefore design a present to the same Cato very speedily ; in the mean time they are getting ready as good a sentence as the former on their side : so betwixt them, it is probable that Cato (as Dr. Garth expressed it) may have something to live upon after he dies. I am your, &c.

* Himself.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 16, 1715.

It was one of the enigmas of Pythagoras, "When the winds rise, worship the echo." A modern writer explains this to signify, "When popular tumults begin, retire to solitudes, or such places where echoes are commonly found, rocks, woods," &c. I am rather of opinion it should be interpreted, "When rumours increase, and when there is abundance of noise and clamour, believe the second report." This I think agrees more exactly with the echo, and is the more natural application of the symbol. However it be, either of these precepts is extremely proper to be followed at this season; and I cannot but applaud your resolution of continuing in what you call your cave in the forest, this winter; and preferring the noise of breaking ice to that of breaking statesmen, the rage of storms to that of parties, the fury and ravage of floods and tempests, to the precipitancy of some and the ruin of others; which, I fear, will be our daily prospects in London.

I sincerely wish myself with you, to contemplate the wonders of God in the firmament, rather than the madness of man on the earth. But I never had so much cause as now to complain of my poetical star, that fixes me at this tumultuous time to attend the jingling of rhymes and the measuring of syllables; to be almost the only trifler in the nation; and as ridiculous as the poet in Petronius, who, while all the rest in the ship were either labouring or praying for life, was scratching his head in a little room, to write a fine description of the tempest.

You tell me, you like the sound of no arms but those of Achilles: for my part, I like them as little as any other arms. I listed myself in the battles of Homer, and I am no sooner in war, but, like most other folks, I wish myself out again.

I heartily join with you in wishing quiet to our native country: quiet in the state, which, like charity in religion, is too much the perfection and happiness of either, to be broken or violated on any pretence or prospect whatsoever. Fire and sword, and fire and faggot, are

equally my aversion. I can pray for opposite parties, and for opposite religions, with great sincerity. I think, to be a lover of one's country is a glorious eloogy, but I do not think it so great a one as to be a lover of mankind.

I sometimes celebrate you under these denominations, and join your health with that of the whole world: a truly Catholic health, which far excels the poor narrow-spirited, ridiculous healths now in fashion, to this Church or that Church. Whatever our teachers may say, they must give us leave at least to wish generously. These, dear sir, are my general dispositions; but whenever I pray or wish for particulars, you are one of the first in the thoughts or affections of your, &c.

LETTER XL.

Mr. Pope to the Hon. J. C. Esq.

June 15, 1711.

I SEND you Dennis's remarks on the Essay*; which equally abound in just criticisms and fine raileries. The few observations in my hand in the margins, are what a morning's leisure permitted me to make purely for your perusal; for I am of opinion that such a critic, as you will find him by the latter part of his book, is but one way to be properly answered, and that way I would not take after what he informs me in his preface, that he is at this time persecuted by fortune. This I knew not before; if I had, his name had been spared in the Essay for that only reason. I cannot conceive what ground he has for so excessive a resentment, nor imagine how these three lines† can be called a reflection on his person, which only describe him subject a little to anger on some occasions. I have heard of combatants so very furious, as to fall down themselves with that very blow which they designed to lay heavy on their antagonists. But if Mr. Dennis's rage proceeds only from a zeal to discourage young and unexperienced writers from scribbling, he should frighten us with his verse, not prose; for

* On Criticism.

† But Appius reddens at each word you speak,
And stares tremendous with a threatening eye,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry.

I have often known, that when all the precepts in the world would not reclaim a sinner, some very sad example has done the business. Yet, to give this man his due, he has objected to one or two lines with reason; and I will alter them in case of another edition; I will make my enemy do me a kindness where he meant an injury, and so serve instead of a friend. What he observes at the bottom of page 20 of his reflections, was objected to by yourself, and had been mended but for the haste of the press: I confess it what the English call a bull in the expression, though the sense be manifest enough. Mr. Dennis's bulls are seldom in the expression; they are generally in the sense.

I shall certainly never make the least reply to him; not only because you advise me, but because I have ever been of opinion, that if a book cannot answer for itself to the public, it is to no sort of purpose for its author to do it. If I am wrong in any sentiment of that Essay, I protest sincerely, I do not desire all the world should be deceived (which would be of very ill consequence), merely that I myself may be thought right (which is of little consequence). I would be the first to recant, for the benefit of others, and the glory of myself; for (as I take it) when a man owns himself to have been in an error, he does but tell you in other words, that he is wiser than he was. But I have had an advantage by the publishing that book, which otherwise I should never have known: it has been the occasion of making me friends and open abettors of several gentlemen of known sense and wit; and of proving to me, what I have till now doubted, that my writings are taken some notice of by the world, or I should never be attacked thus in particular. I have read, that it was a custom among the Romans, while a general rode in triumph, to have the common soldiers in the streets that railed at him and reproached him; to put him in mind, that though his services were in the main approved and rewarded, yet he had faults enough to keep him humble.

You will see by this, that whoever sets up for a wit in these days ought to have the constancy of a primitive Christian, and be prepared to suffer martyrdom in the cause of it. But sure this is the first time that a wit was attacked for

his religion, as you will find I am most zealously in this treatise; and you know, sir, what alarms I have had from the opposite side* on this account. Have I not reason to cry out with the poor fellow in Virgil,

*Quid jam misero mihi denique restat!
Cui neque apud Danaos usquam locus, et super ipsi
Dardanidæ infensi pœnas cum sanguine possunt!*

It is however my happiness that you, sir, are impartial.

Jove was alike to Latian and to Phrygian;
For you well know, that wit's of no religion.

The manner in which Mr. D. takes to pieces several particular lines detached from their natural places, may show how easy it is to a caviller to give a new sense, or a new nonsense, to any thing. And indeed his constructions are not more wrested from the genuine meaning, than theirs who objected to the heterodox parts, as they called them.

Our friend the Abbé is not of that sort; who with the utmost candour and freedom has modestly told me what others thought, and shewn himself one (as he very well expresses it) rather of a number than a party. The only difference between us, in relation to the monks, is, that he thinks most sorts of learning flourished among them; and I am of opinion, that only some sort of learning was barely kept alive by them: he believes that in the most natural and obvious sense, that line ("A second deluge learning over-run") will be understood of learning in general: and I fancy it will be understood only (as it is meant) of polite learning, criticism, poetry, &c. which is the only learning concerned in the subject of the Essay. It is true, that the monks did preserve what learning there was, about Nicholas the Fifth's time; but those who succeeded fell into the depth of barbarism, or at least stood at a stay while others arose from thence; insomuch that even Erasmus and Reuchlin could hardly laugh them out of it. I am highly obliged to the Abbé's zeal in my commendation, and goodness in not concealing what he thinks my error: and his testifying some esteem for the book, just at a time when his brethren raised a clamour against it, is an instance of great generosity and

* See the ensuing letter.

candour, which I shall ever acknowledge.
Your, &c.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. Pope to the Hon. J. C., Esq.

July, 18, 1711.

IN your last you informed me of the mistaken zeal of some people, who seem to make it no less their business to persuade men they are erroneous, than doctors do that they are sick; only that they may magnify their own cure, and triumph over an imaginary distemper. The simile objected to in my Essay,

(Thus wit, like faith, by each man is apply'd
To one small sect; and all are damn'd beside)

plainly concludes at this second line, where stands a full stop: and what follows (*Meanly they seek, &c.*) speaks only of wit (which is meant by that blessing, and that sun); for how can the sun of faith be said to sublime the southern wits, and to ripen the geniuses of northern climates? I fear these gentlemen understand grammar as little as they do criticism: and, perhaps, out of good nature to the monks, are willing to take from them the censure of ignorance, and to have it to themselves. The word *they* refers (as I am sure I meant, and as I thought every one must have known) to those critics there spoken of, who are partial to some particular set of writers, to the prejudice of all others. And the very simile itself, if twice read, may convince them that the censure here of damning, lies not on our church at all, unless they call our church *one small sect*: and the cautious words (*by each man*) manifestly shew it a general reflection on all such (whoever they are) who entertain those narrow and limited notions of the mercy of the Almighty; which the reformed ministers and Presbyterians are as guilty of as any people living.

Yet, after all, I promise you, sir, if the alteration of a word or two will gratify any man of sound faith, though weak understanding, I will (though it were from no other principle than that of common good nature) comply with it; and if you please but to particularize the spot where their objection lies (for it is in a very narrow compass), that stumbling block, though it be but a little

pebble, shall be removed out of their way. If the heart of these good disputants (who, I am afraid, being bred up to wrangle in the schools, cannot get rid of the humour all their lives) should proceed so far as to personal reflections upon me, I assure you, notwithstanding, I will do or say nothing, however provoked (for some people can no more provoke than oblige), that is unbecoming the true character of a Catholic. I will set before me the example of that great man, and great saint, Erasmus; who in the midst of calumny proceeded with all the calmness of innocence, and the unrevenging spirit of primitive Christianity. However, I would advise them to suffer the mention of him to pass unregarded, lest I should be forced to do that for his reputation which I would never do for my own: I mean, to vindicate so great a light of our church from the malice of past times, and the ignorance of the present, in a language which may extend farther than that in which the trifle about criticism is written. I wish these gentlemen would be contented with finding fault with me only, who will submit to them, right or wrong, as far as I only am concerned; I have a greater regard to the quiet of mankind than to disturb it for things of so little consequence as my credit and my sense. A little humility can do a poet no hurt, and a little charity can do a priest none: for, as St. Austin finely says, *Ubi charitas, ibi humilitas; ubi humilitas, ibi pax.* Your, &c.

LETTER XLII.

From the same to the same.

July 19, 1711.

THE concern which you more than seem to be affected with for my reputation, by the several accounts you have so obligingly given of what reports and censures the holy Vandals have thought fit to pass upon me, makes me desirous of telling so good a friend my whole thoughts of this matter; and of setting before you, in a clear light, the true state of it.

I have ever believed the best piece of service one could do to our religion, was openly to express our detestation and scorn of all those mean artifices and *pia*

fraudes, which it stands so little in need of, and which have laid it under so great a scandal among its enemies.

Nothing has been so much a scarecrow to them, as that too peremptory and uncharitable assertion of an utter impossibility of salvation to all but ourselves: invincible ignorance excepted, which indeed some people define under so great limitations, and with such exclusions, that it seems as if that word were rather invented as a salvo, or expedient, not to be thought too bold with the thunderbolts of God (which are hurled about so freely on almost all mankind by the hands of ecclesiastics), than as a real exception to almost universal damnation. For besides the small number of the truly faithful in our church, we must again subdivide; the Jansenist is damned by the Jesuit, the Jesuit by the Jansenist, the Scotist by the Thomist, and so forth.

There may be errors, I grant; but I cannot think them of such consequence as to destroy utterly the charity of mankind, the very greatest bond in which we are engaged by God to one another: therefore, I own to you, I was glad of any opportunity to express my dislike of so shocking a sentiment as those of the religion I profess are commonly charged with; and I hope, a slight insinuation, introduced so easily by a casual similitude only, could never have given offence; but, on the contrary, must needs have done good, in a nation and time, wherein we are the smaller party, and consequently most misrepresented, and most in need of vindication.

For the same reason, I took occasion to mention the superstition of some ages after the subversion of the Roman empire, which is too manifest a truth to be denied, and does in no sort reflect upon the present professors of our faith, who are free from it. Our silence in these points may, with some reason, make our adversaries think we allow and persist in those bigotries; which yet in reality all good and sensible men despise, though they are persuaded not to speak against them, I cannot tell why, since now it is no way the interest even of the worst of our priesthood (as it might have been then) to have them smothered in silence: for, as the opposite sects are now prevailing, it is too late to hinder our church from being slandered; it is our

business now to vindicate ourselves from being thought abettors of what they charge us with. This cannot so well be brought about with serious faces; we must laugh with them at what deserves it, or be content to be laughed at, with such as deserve it.

As to particulars: you cannot but have observed, that at first the whole objection against the simile of wit and faith lay to the word *they*: when that was beyond contradiction removed (the very grammar serving to confute them), then the objection was against the simile itself; or if that simile will not be objected to (sense and common reason being indeed a little stubborn, and not apt to give way to every body), next the mention of superstition must become a crime; as if religion and she were sisters, or that it were scandal upon the family of Christ to say a word against the devil's bastard. Afterwards, more mischief is discovered in a place that seemed innocent at first, the two lines about *schismatics*. An ordinary man would imagine the author plainly declared against those schismatics, for quitting the true faith, out of a contempt of the understanding of some few of its believers: but these believers are called *dull*; and because I say that those schismatics think some believers dull, therefore these charitable interpreters of my meaning will have it that I think all believers dull. I was lately telling Mr. ** these objections; who assured me, I had said nothing which a Catholic need to disown; and I have cause to know that gentleman's fault (if he has any) is not want of zeal: he put a notion into my head, which, I confess, I cannot but acquiesce in: that when a set of people are piqued at any truth which they think to their own disadvantage, their method of revenge on the truth-speaker is to attack his reputation a bye-way, and not openly to object to the place they are really galled by: what these therefore (in his opinion) are in earnest angry at, is, that Erasmus, whom their tribe oppressed and persecuted, should be vindicated after an age of obloquy by one of their own people, willing to utter an honest truth in behalf of the dead, whom no man sure will flatter, and to whom few will do justice. Others, you know, were as angry that I mentioned Mr. Walsh with honour: who as he never refused to any one of merit, of any

party, the praise due to him, so honestly deserved it from all others, though of ever so different interests or sentiments. May I be ever guilty of this sort of liberty, and latitude of principle; which gives us the hardness of speaking well of those whom envy oppresses even after death. As I would always speak well of my living friends when they are absent, nay, because they are absent, so would I much more of the dead, in that eternal absence: and the rather, because I expect no thanks for it.

Thus, sir, you see I do in my conscience persist in what I have written; yet in my friendship I will recant and alter whatever you please, in case of a second edition (which I think the book will not so soon arrive at, for Tonson's printer told me he drew off a thousand copies in this first impression, and, I fancy, a treatise of this nature, which not one gentleman in threescore, even of a liberal education, can understand, can hardly exceed the vent of that number). You shall find me a true Trojan in any faith and friendship; in both which I will persevere to the end. Your, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. Pope to the Hon. J. C., Esq.

Dec 5, 1712.

You have at length complied with the request I have often made you, for you have shewn me, I must confess, several of my faults in the sight of those letters. Upon a review of them, I find many things that would give me shame, if I were not more desirous to be thought honest than prudent; so many things freely thrown out, such lengths of unreserved friendship, thoughts just warm from the brain without any polishing or dress, the very dishabille of the understanding. You have proved yourself more tender of another's embryos than the fondest mothers are of their own, for you have preserved every thing that I miscarried of. Since I know this, I shall in one respect be more afraid of writing to you than ever, at this careless rate, because I see my evil works may again rise in judgment against me; yet in another respect I shall be less afraid, since this has given me such a proof of

the extreme indulgence you afford to my slightest thoughts. The revival of these letters has been a kind of examination of conscience to me; so fairly and faithfully have I set down in them from time to time the true and undisguised state of my mind. But I find that these, which were intended as sketches of my friendship, give as imperfect images of it as the little landscapes we commonly see in black and white do of a beautiful country; they can represent but a very small part of it, and that deprived of the life and lustre of nature. I perceive that the more I endeavoured to render manifest the real affection and value I ever had for you, I did but injure it by representing less and less of it: as glasses which are designed to make an object very clear, generally contract it. Yet as when people have a full idea of a thing first upon their own knowledge, the least traces of it serve to refresh the remembrance, and are not displeasing on that score; so I hope, the foreknowledge you had of my esteem for you, is the reason that you do not dislike my letters.

They will not be of any great service (I find) in the design I mentioned to you: I believe I had better steal from a richer man, and plunder your letters (which I have kept as carefully as I would letters patents, since they entitle me to what I more value than titles of honour). You have some cause to apprehend this usage from me, if what some say be true, that I am a great borrower; however, I have hitherto had the luck that none of my creditors have challenged me for it: and those who say it are such, whose writings no man ever borrowed from, so have the least reason to complain; and whose works are granted on all hands to be but too much their own. Another has been pleased to declare, that my verses are corrected by other men: I verily believe theirs were never corrected by any man: but indeed if mine have not, it was not my fault; I have endeavoured my utmost that they should. But these things are only whispered, and I will not encroach upon Bays's province and *pen whispers*; so hasten to conclude.

Your, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

Mr. Pope to General Anthony Hamilton.*

[Upon his having translated into French verse the *Essay on Criticism*.]

Oct. 10, 1713.

IF I could as well express, or (if you will allow me to say it) translate the sentiments of my heart, as you have done those of my head in your excellent version of my *Essay*,—I should not only appear the best writer in the world, but, what I much more desire to be thought, the most your servant of any man living. It is an advantage very rarely known, to receive at once a great honour and a great improvement. This, sir, you have afforded me, having at the same time made others take my sense, and taught me to understand my own; if I may call that my own which is indeed more properly yours. Your verses are no more a translation of mine, than Virgil's are of Homer's; but are, like his, the justest imitation, and the noblest commentary.

In putting me into a French dress, you have not only adorned my outside, but mended my shape; and, if I am now a good figure, I must consider you have naturalized me into a country which is famous for making every man a fine gentleman. It is by your means that (contrary to most young travellers) I am come back much better than I went out.

I cannot but wish we had a bill of commerce for translation established the next parliament; we could not fail of being gainers by that, nor of making ourselves amends for any thing we have lost by the war. Nay, though we should insist upon the demolishing of Boileau's works, the French, as long as they have writers of your form, might have as good an equivalent.

Upon the whole, I am really as proud as our ministers ought to be, of the terms I have gained from abroad; and I design, like them, to publish speedily to the world the benefits accruing from them; for I cannot resist the temptation of printing your admirable translation here†, to which if you will be so obliging to

* Author of the *Memoirs of the Count de Grammont*, *Contas*, and other pieces of note in French.

† This was never done; for the two printed French versions are neither of this hand. The

give me leave to prefix your name, it will be the only addition you can make to the honour already done me. I am your, &c.

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Steele.

June 18, 1712.

You have obliged me with a very kind letter, by which I find you shift the scene of your life from the town to the country, and enjoy that mixed state which wise men both delight in, and are qualified for. Methinks the moralists and philosophers have generally run too much into extremes in commending entirely either solitude or public life. In the former, men for the most part grow useless by too much rest; and in the latter, are destroyed by too much precipitation; as waters, lying still, putrify, and are good for nothing; and running violently on, do but the more mischief in their passage to others, and are swallowed up and lost the sooner themselves. Those indeed who can be useful to all states, should be like gentle streams, that not only glide through lonely valleys and forests, amidst the flocks and the shepherds, but visit populous towns in their course, and are at once of ornament and service to them. But there are another sort of people who seem designed for solitude; such, I mean, as have more to hide than to shew. As for my own part, I am one of those whom Seneca says, "*Tam umbratiles sunt, ut putent in turbido esse, quicquid in luce est.*" Some men, like some pictures, are fitter for a corner than a full light; and, I believe, such as have a natural bent to solitude (to carry on the former similitude) are like waters, which may be forced into fountains, and exalted into a great height, may make a noble figure and a louder noise; but after all, they would run more smoothly, quietly, and plentifully, in their own natural course upon the ground. The consideration of this would make me very well contented with the possession only of that quiet which Cowley calls the Companion of

one was done by Monsieur Roboton, private secretary to king George the First, printed in quarto at Amsterdam, and at London 1717. The other by the Abbé Resnel, in octavo, with a large preface and notes, at Paris, 1730.

Obscurity. But whoever has the Muses too for his companions, can never be idle enough to be uneasy. Thus, sir, you see, I would flatter myself into a good opinion of my own way of living. Plutarch just now told me, that it is in human life as in a game at tables, where a man may wish for the highest cast; but, if his chance be otherwise, he is even to play it as well as he can, and to make the best of it. I am your, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

From the same to the same.

July 15, 1712.

You formerly observed to me, that nothing made a more ridiculous figure in a man's life, than the disparity we often find in him sick and well: thus one of an unfortunate constitution is perpetually exhibiting a miserable example of the weakness of his mind, and of his body, in their turns. I have had frequent opportunities of late to consider myself in these different views; and, I hope, have received some advantage by it, if what Waller says be true, that

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lies in new light through chinks that time
has made;

then surely sickness, contributing no less than old age to the shaking down this scaffolding of the body, may discover the inward structure more plainly. Sickness is a sort of early old age: it teaches us a diffidence in our earthly state, and inspires us with the thoughts of a future, better than a thousand volumes of philosophers and divines. It gives so warning a concussion to those props of our vanity, our strength and youth, that we think of fortifying ourselves within, when there is so little dependence upon our outworks. Youth, at the very best, is but a betrayer of human life in a gentler and smoother manner than age; it is like a stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is undermining it at the root in secret. My youth has dealt more fairly and openly with me; it has afforded several prospects of my danger, and given me an advantage not very common to young men, that the attractions of the world have not daz-

zled me very much; and I begin, where most people end, with a full conviction of the emptiness of all sorts of ambition, and the unsatisfactory nature of all human pleasures. When a smart fit of sickness tells me this empty tenement of my body will fall in a little time, I am even as unconcerned as was that honest Hibernian, who being in bed in the great storm some years ago, and told the house would tumble over his head, made answer, "What care I for the house! I am only a lodger." I fancy it is the best time to die when one is in the best humour; and so excessively weak as I now am, I may say with conscience, that I am not at all uneasy at the thought, that many men, whom I never had any esteem for, are likely to enjoy this world after me. When I reflect what an inconsiderable little atom every single man is, with respect to the whole creation, methinks it is a shame to be concerned at the removal of such a trivial animal as I am. The morning after my exit, the sun will rise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green, the world will proceed in its own course, people will laugh as heartily, and marry as fast, as they were used to do. The memory of man (as it is elegantly expressed in the Book of Wisdom) passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but one day. There are reasons enough in the fourth chapter of the same book to make any young man contented with the prospect of death. "For honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, or is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the grey hair to men, and an unspotted life is old age. He was taken away speedily, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul," &c. I am your, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 7, 1712.

I was the other day in company with five or six men of some learning; where, chancing to mention the famous verses which the emperor Adrian spoke on his death-bed, they were all agreed that it was a piece of gaiety unworthy of that prince in those circumstances. I could not but differ from this opinion: me-

thinks it was by no means a gay, but a very serious soliloquy to his soul at the point of his departure ; in which sense I naturally took the verses at my first reading them, when I was very young, and before I knew what interpretation the world generally put upon them.

*Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque, corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca ?
Pallidula, regida, nudula,
Nec (ut soles) dabis joca !*

“ Alas, my soul ! thou pleasing companion of this body, thou fleeting thing that art now deserting it ! whither art thou flying ? to what unknown scene ? all trembling, fearful, and pensive ! what now is become of thy former wit and humour ? thou shalt jest and be gay no more ! ”

I confess I cannot apprehend where lies the trifling in all this ; it is the most natural and obvious reflection imaginable to a dying man : and if we consider the emperor was a heathen, that doubt concerning the future state of his soul will seem so far from being the effect of want of thought, that it was scarce reasonable he should think otherwise ; not to mention that here is a plain confession included of his belief in its immortality. The diminutive epithets of *vagula*, *blandula*, and the rest, appear not to me as expressions of levity, but rather of endearment and concern ; such as we find in Catullus, and the authors of *Hendecasyllabi* after him, where they are used to express the utmost love and tenderness for their mistresses. — If you think me right in my notion of the last words of Adrian, be pleased to insert it in the Spectator ; if not, to suppress it. I am, &c.

*Adriani morientis ad Animam,
Translated.*

Ah, fleeting spirit ! wand'ring fire,
That long hast warm'd my tender breast,
Must thou no more this frame inspire ?
No more a pleasing cheerful guest ?
Whither, ah whither art thou flying ?
To what dark, undiscover'd shore ?
Thou seem'st all trembling, shiv'ring, dying,
And wit and humour are no more !

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. Steele to Mr. Pope.

Nov. 12, 1712.

I HAVE read over your Temple of Fame twice, and cannot find any thing amiss, of weight enough to call a fault ; but see in it a thousand thousand beauties. Mr. Addison shall see it to-morrow : after his perusal of it I will let you know his thoughts. I desire you would let me know whether you are at leisure or not ? I have a design which I shall open a month or two hence, with the assistance of the few like yourself. If your thoughts are unengaged, I shall explain myself further. I am your, &c.

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Steele.

Nov. 16, 1712.

You oblige me by the indulgence you have shewn to the poem I sent you ; but will oblige me much more by the kind severity I hope from you. No errors are so trivial but they deserve to be mended. But since you say you see nothing that may be called a fault, can you but think it so, that I have confined the attendance of the guardian spirits* to Heaven's favourites only ? I could point you to several ; but it is my business to be informed of those faults I do not know ; and as for those I do, not to talk of them, but to correct them. You speak of that poem in a style I neither merit nor expect ; but, I assure you, if you freely mark or dash out, I shall look upon your blots to be its greatest beauties ; I mean, if Mr. Addison and yourself should like it in the whole ; otherwise the trouble of correction is what I would not take, for I really was so diffident of it as to let it lie by me these two years†, just as you now see it. I am afraid of nothing so much as to impose any thing on the world which is unworthy of its acceptance.

As to the last period of your letter, I shall be very ready and glad to contribute to any design that tends to the advantage of mankind, which, I am sure, all yours do. I wish I had but as much

* This is not now to be found in the Temple of Fame, which is the poem here spoken of.

† Hence it appears this poem was writ when the author was twenty-two years old.

capacity as leisure, for I am perfectly idle (a sign I have not much capacity).

If you will entertain the best opinion of me, be pleased to think me your friend. Assure Mr. Addison of my most faithful service; of every one's esteem he must be assured already. I am your, &c.

LETTER L.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 29, 1712.

I AM sorry you published that notion about Adrian's verses as mine: had I imagined you would use my name, I should have expressed my sentiments with more modesty and diffidence. I only sent it to have your opinion, and not to publish my own, which I distrusted. But I think the supposition you draw from the notion of Adrian's being addicted to magic, is a little uncharitable ("that he might fear no sort of deity, good or bad"), since in the third verse he plainly testifies his apprehension of a future state, by being solicitous whither his soul was going. As to what you mention of his using gay and ludicrous expressions, I have owned my opinion to be, that the expressions are not so, but that diminutives are as often, in the Latin tongue, used as marks of tenderness and concern.

Anima is no more than my soul, *animula* has the force of my dear soul. To say *virgo bella* is not half so endearing as *virguncula bellula*; and had Augustus only called Horace *lepidum hominem*, it had amounted to no more than that he thought him a pleasant fellow: it was the *homunciolus* that expressed the love and tenderness that great emperor had for him. And perhaps I should myself be much better pleased, if I were told you called me your little friend, than if you complimented me with the title of a great genius, or an eminent hand, as Jacob does all his authors. I am your, &c.

LETTER LI.

Mr. Steele to Mr. Pope.

Dec. 4, 1712.

THIS is to desire of you that you would please to make an ode as of a cheerful dying spirit; that is to say, the emperor

Adrian's *animula vagula* put into two or three stanzas for music. If you comply with this, and send me word so, you will very particularly oblige your, &c.

LETTER LII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Steele.

I DO not send you word I will do, but have already done the thing you desired of me. You have it (as Cowley calls it) just warm from the brain. It came to me the first moment I waked this morning; yet, you will see, it was not so absolutely inspiration, but that I had in my head not only the verses of Adrian, but the fine fragment of Sappho, &c.

The Dying Christian to his Soul.

ODE.

I.

Vital spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

II.

Hark! they whisper: angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite,
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my Soul, can this be Death?

III.

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave, where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

LETTER LIII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Addison.

July 20, 1713.

I AM more joyed at your return than I should be at that of the sun, so much as I wish for him this melancholy wet season; but it is his fate, too, like yours, to be displeasing to owls and obscene animals, who cannot bear his lustre. What put me in mind of these night-birds was John Dennis, whom, I think, you are best revenged upon, as the sun was in the fable, upon these bats and beastly birds above mentioned, only by *shining on*. I am so far from esteeming it any misfortune, that I congratulate you upon having your share in that, which all the

great men and all the good men that ever lived have had their part of—envy and calumny. To be uncensured and to be obscure is the same thing. You may conclude from what I here say, that it was never in my thoughts to have offered you my pen in any direct reply to such a critic, but only in some little raillery; not in defence of you, but in contempt of him*. But indeed your opinion that it is entirely to be neglected, would have been my own, had it been my own case: but I felt more warmth here than I did when I first saw his book against myself (though indeed in two minutes it made me heartily merry). He has written against every thing the world has approved these many years. I apprehend but one danger from Dennis's disliking our sense, that it may make us think so very well of it as to become proud and conceited upon his disapprobation.

I must not here omit to do justice to Mr. Gay, whose zeal in your concern is worthy a friend and honourer of you. He writ to me in the most pressing terms about it, though with that just contempt of the critic that he deserves. I think, in these days one honest man is obliged to acquaint another who are his friends; when so many mischievous insects are daily at work to make people of merit suspicious of each other; that they may have the satisfaction of seeing them looked upon no better than themselves. I am your, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Mr. Addison to Mr. Pope.

Oct. 20, 1713.

I WAS extremely glad to receive a letter from you, but more so upon reading the contents of it. The work† you mention will, I dare say, very sufficiently recommend itself when your name appears with the proposals: and if you think I can any way contribute to the forwarding of them, you cannot lay greater obligation upon me than by employing me in such an office. As I have an ambition of having it known that

* This relates to the paper occasioned by Dennis's Remarks upon Cato, called "Dr. Norris's Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis."

† The translation of the Iliad.

you are my friend, I shall be very proud of shewing it by this or any other instance. I question not but your translation will enrich our tongue, and do honour to our country; for I conclude of it already from these performances with which you have obliged the public. I would only have you consider how it may most turn to your advantage. Excuse my impertinence in this particular, which proceeds from my zeal for your ease and happiness. The work would cost you a great deal of time, and unless you undertake it, will, I am afraid, never be executed by any other; at least I know none of this age that is equal to it beside yourself.

I am at present wholly immersed in country business, and begin to take delight in it. I wish I might hope to see you here some time; and will not despair of it when you engage in a work that will require solitude and retirement. I am your, &c.

LETTER LV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Addison.

Oct. 10, 1714.

I HAVE been acquainted by one of my friends, who omits no opportunities of gratifying me, that you have lately been pleased to speak of me in a manner which nothing but the real respect I have for you can deserve. May I hope that some late malevolencies have lost their effect? Indeed it is neither for me nor my enemies, to pretend to tell you whether I am your friend or not; but if you would judge by probabilities, I beg to know which of your poetical acquaintance has so little interest in pretending to be so? Methinks no man should question the real friendship of one who desires no real service. I am only to get as much from the whigs as I got from the Tories, that is to say, civility, being neither so proud as to be insensible of any good office, nor so humble as not to dare heartily to despise any man who does me an injustice.

I will not value myself upon having ever guarded all the degrees of respect for you; for (to say the truth) all the world speaks well of you, and I should be under a necessity of doing the same, whether I cared for you or not.

As to what you have said of me, I shall never believe that the author of Cato can speak one thing and think another. As a proof that I account you sincere, I beg a favour of you; it is, that you would look over the two first books of my translation of Homer, which are in the hands of my lord Halifax. I am sensible how much the reputation of any poetical work will depend upon the character you give it: it is therefore some evidence of the trust I repose in your good-will, when I give you this opportunity of speaking ill of me with justice; and yet expect you will tell me your truest thoughts, at the same time that you tell others your most favourable ones.

I have a farther request, which I must press with earnestness. My bookseller is reprinting the Essay on Criticism, to which you have done too much honour in your Spectator of No. 253. The period in that paper, where you say, "I have admitted some strokes of ill-nature into that Essay," is the only one I could wish omitted of all you have written; but I would not desire it should be so, unless I had the merit of removing your objection. I beg you but to point out those strokes to me, and you may be assured they shall be treated without mercy.

Since we are upon proofs of sincerity (which I am pretty confident will turn to the advantage of us both in each other's opinion) give me leave to name another passage in the same Spectator, which I wish you would alter. It is where you mention an observation upon Homer's verses of Sisyphus's stone, as never having been made before by any of the critics. I happened to find the same in Dionysius of Halicarnassus's treatise, Περὶ συνθέσεως ὀνομάτων, who treats very largely upon these verses. I know you will think fit to soften your expression when you see the passage, which you must needs have read, though it be since slipt out of your memory. I am, with the utmost esteem, your, &c.

LETTER LVI.

Mr. Pope to the Honourable ———.

June 8, 1714.

THE question you ask in relation to Mr. Addison and Philips, I shall answer in a

few words. Mr. Philips did express himself with much indignation against me one evening at Burton's coffee-house (as I was told), saying, that I was entered into a cabal with dean Swift and others to write against the whig interest, and in particular to undermine his own reputation, and that of his friends Steele and Addison: but Mr. Philips never opened his lips to my face, on this or any like occasion, though I was almost every night in the same room with him, nor ever offered me any indecorum. Mr. Addison came to me a night or two after Philips had talked in this idle manner, and assured me of his disbelief of what had been said, of the friendship we should always maintain, and desired I would say nothing further of it. My lord Halifax did me the honour to stir in this matter, by speaking to several people to obviate a false aspersion, which might have done me no small prejudice with one party. However, Philips did all he could secretly to continue the report with the Hanover Club, and kept in his hands the subscriptions paid for me to him; as secretary to that club. The heads of it have since given him to understand that they take it ill; but (upon the terms I ought to be with such a man) I could not ask him for this money, but commissioned one of the players, his equals, to receive it. This is the whole matter: but as to the secret grounds of this malignity, they will make a very pleasant history when we meet. Mr. Congreve and some others have been much diverted with it; and most of the gentlemen of the Hanover Club have made it the subject of their ridicule on their secretary. It is to the management of Philips, that the world owes Mr. Gay's Pastorals. The ingenious author is extremely your servant, and would have complied with your kind invitation, but that he is just now appointed secretary to my lord Clarendon, in his embassy to Hanover.

I am sensible of the zeal and friendship with which, I am sure, you will always defend your friend in his absence, from all those little tales and calumnies which a man of any genius or merit is born to. I shall never complain, while I am happy in such noble defenders and in such contemptible opponents. May their envy and ill-nature ever increase, to the glory and pleasure of those they

would injure! May they represent me what they will as long as you think me, what I am, your, &c.

LETTER LVII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas.

Aug. 16, 1714.

I THANK you for your good offices, which are numberless. Homer advances so fast, that he begins to look about for the ornaments he is to appear in, like a modish modern author;

Picture in the front,
With bays and wicked rhyme upon't.

I have the greatest proof in nature at present of the amusing power of poetry, for it takes me up so entirely, that I scarce see what passes under my nose, and hear nothing that is said about me. To follow poetry as one ought, one must forget father and mother, and cleave to it alone. My reverie has been so deep, that I have scarce had an interval to think myself uneasy in the want of your company. I now and then just miss you as I step into bed; this minute indeed I want extremely to see you, the next I shall dream of nothing but the taking of Troy, or the recovery of Briseis.

I fancy no friendship is so likely to prove lasting as ours, because, I am pretty sure, there never was a friendship of so easy a nature. We neither of us demand any mighty things from each other; what vanity we have, expects its gratification from other people. It is not I that am to tell you what an artist you are, nor is it you that are to tell me what a poet I am; but it is from the world abroad we hope (piously hope) to hear these things. At home we follow our business, when we have any; and think and talk most of each other when we have none. It is not unlike the happy friendship of a stayed man and his wife, who are seldom so fond as to hinder the business of the house from going on all day, or so indolent as not to find consolation in each other every evening. Thus, well-meaning couples hold in amity to the last, by not expecting too much from human nature; while romantic friendships, like violent loves, begin with disquiets, proceed to jealousies, and conclude in animosities. I have lived to see the fierce advancement, the sudden turn,

and the abrupt period of three or four of these enormous friendships, and am perfectly convinced of the truth of a maxim we once agreed in, that nothing hinders the constant agreement of people who live together, but merely vanity; a secret insisting upon what they think their dignity of merit, and an inward expectation of such an over-measure of deference and regard, as answers to their own extravagant false scale; and which nobody can pay, because none but themselves can tell exactly to what pitch it amounts. I am, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Mr. Jervas to Mr. Pope.

Aug. 20, 1714.

I HAVE a particular to tell you at this time, which pleases me so much, that you must expect a more than ordinary alacrity in every turn. You know I could keep you in suspense for twenty lines, but I will tell you directly, that Mr. Addison and I have had a conversation, that it would have been worth your while to have been placed behind the wainscot or behind some half-length picture, to have heard. He assured me, that he would make use not only of his interest but of his art, to do you some service; he did not mean his art of poetry, but his art at court; and he is sensible that nothing can have a better air for himself than moving in your favour, especially since insinuations were spread, that he did not care you should prosper too much as a poet. He protests that it shall not be his fault, if there is not the best intelligence in the world, and the most hearty friendship, &c. He owns, he was afraid Dr. Swift might have carried you too far among the enemy during the heat of the animosity; but now all is safe, and you are escaped even in his opinion. I promised in your name, like a good godfather, not that you should renounce the devil and all his works, but that you would be delighted to find him your friend, merely for his own sake; therefore prepare yourself for some civilities.

I have done Homer's head, shadowed and heightened carefully; and I enclose the outline of the same size, that you may determine whether you would have it so large, or reduced to make room for feuillage or laurel round the oval, or

about the square of the busto. Perhaps there is something more solemn in the image itself, if I can get it well performed.

If I have been instrumental in bringing you and Mr. Addison together with all sincerity, I value myself upon it as an acceptable piece of service to such a one as I know you to be. Your, &c.

LETTER LIX.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas.

Aug. 27, 1714.

I AM just arrived from Oxford, very well diverted and entertained there. Every one is much concerned for the queen's death. No panegyrics ready yet for the king.

I admire your whig principles of resistance exceedingly, in the spirit of the Barcelonians: I join in your wish for them. Mr. Addison's verses on Liberty, in his letter from Italy, would be a good form of prayer in my opinion, *O Liberty! thou goddess heavenly bright*, &c.

What you mention of the friendly office you endeavoured to do betwixt Mr. Addison and me, deserves acknowledgments on my part. You thoroughly know my regard to his character, and my propensity to testify it by all ways in my power. You as thoroughly know the scandalous meanness of that proceeding which was used by Philips, to make a man I so highly value suspect my disposition towards him. But as, after all, Mr. Addison must be the judge in what regards himself, and has seemed to be no very just one to me, so, I must own to you, I expect nothing but civility from him, how much soever I wish for his friendship. As for any offices of real kindness or service which it is in his power to do me, I should be ashamed to receive them from any man who had no better opinion of my morals than to think me a party-man; nor of my temper, than to believe me capable of maligning or envying another's reputation as a poet. So I leave it to time to convince him as to both; to shew him the shallow depths of those half-witted creatures who misinformed him, and to prove that I am incapable of endeavouring to lessen a person whom I would be proud to imitate, and therefore ashamed to flatter. In a word, Mr. Addison is sure of

my respect at all times, and of my real friendship whenever he shall think fit to know me for what I am.

For all that passed betwixt Dr. Swift and me, you know the whole (without reserve) of our correspondence. The engagements I had to him were such as the actual services he had done me, in relation to the subscription for Homer, obliged me to. I must have leave to be grateful to him, and to any one who serves me, let him be ever so obnoxious to any party: nor did the tory party ever put me to the hardship of asking this leave, which is the greatest obligation I owe to it; and I expect no greater from the whig party than the same liberty. A curse on the word Party, which I have been forced to use so often in this period! I wish the present reign may put an end to the distinction, that there may be no other for the future than that of honest and knave, fool and man of sense; these two sorts must always be enemies: but for the rest, may all people do as you and I, believe what they please, and be friends. I am, &c.

LETTER LX.

Mr. Pope to the Earl of Halifax.

Dec. 1, 1714.

My lord,

I AM obliged to you, both for the favours you have done me, and for those you intend me. I distrust neither your will nor your memory, when it is to do good; and if ever I become troublesome or solicitous, it must not be out of expectation, but out of gratitude. Your lordship may either cause me to live agreeably in the town, or contentedly in the country, which is really all the difference I set between an easy fortune and a small one. It is indeed a high strain of generosity in you, to think of making me easy all my life, only because I have been so happy as to divert you some few hours; but if I may have leave to add, if it is because you think me no enemy to my native country, there will appear a better reason; for I must of consequence be very much (as I sincerely am) yours, &c.

LETTER LXI*.

Dr. Parnelle to Mr. Pope.

I AM writing you a long letter; but all the tediousness I feel in it is, that it makes me during the time think more intently of my being far from you. I fancy if I were with you, I could remove some of the uneasiness which you may have felt from the opposition of the world, and which you should be ashamed to feel, since it is but the testimony which one part of it gives you that your merit is unquestionable. What would you have otherwise, from ignorance, envy, or those tempers which vie with you in your own way? I know this in mankind, that when our ambition is unable to attain its end, it is not only wearied, but exasperated too, at the vanity of its labours: then we speak ill of happier studies, and, sighing, condemn the excellence which we find above our reach.

My Zoilus†, which you used to write about, I finished last spring, and left in town. I waited till I came up to send it you; but not arriving here before your book was out, imagined it a lost piece of labour. If you will still have it, you need only write me word.

I have here seen the first book of Homer‡, which came out at a time when it could not but appear as a kind of setting up against you. My opinion is, that you may, if you please, give them thanks who writ it. Neither the numbers nor the spirit have an equal mastery with yours; but what surprises me more is, that, a scholar being concerned, there should happen to be some mistakes in the author's sense; such as putting the light of Pallas's eyes into the eyes of Achilles: making the taunt of Achilles to Agamemnon (that he should have spoils when Troy should be taken) to be a cool and serious proposal: the translating what you call *ablution* by the word *offals*, and so leaving water out of the

* This and the three extracts concerning the translation of the first Iliad, set on foot by Mr. Addison, Mr. Pope omitted in his first edition.

† Printed for B. Lintot, 1715, 8vo, and afterwards added to the last edition of his Poems.

‡ Written by Mr. Addison, and published in the name of Mr. Tickell.

rite of lustration, &c.; but you must have taken notice of all this before. I write not to inform you, but to shew I always have you at heart. I am, &c.

Extract of a Letter of the Reverend Dr. Berkley, Dean of Londonderry.

July 7, 1715.

—SOME days ago, three or four gentlemen and myself, exerting that right which all readers pretend to over authors, sat in judgment upon the two new translations of the first Iliad. Without partiality to my countrymen, I assure you, they all gave the preference where it was due; being unanimously of opinion, that yours was equally just to the sense with Mr. —'s, and without comparison more easy, more poetical, and more sublime. But I will say no more on such a threadbare subject as your late performance is at this time. I am, &c.

Extract from a Letter of Mr. Gay to Mr. Pope.

July 8, 1715.

—I HAVE just set down sir Samuel Garth at the opera. He bid me tell you, that every body is pleased with your translation but a few at Button's; and that sir Richard Steele told him, that Mr. Addison said the other translation was the best that ever was in any language*. He treated me with extreme civility; and out of kindness gave me a squeeze by the fore-finger. I am informed, that at Button's your character is made very free with as to morals, &c., and Mr. Addison says that your translation and Tickell's are both very well done; but that the latter has more of Homer. I am, &c.

Extract from a Letter of Dr. Arbuthnot to Mr. Pope.

July 9, 1715.

—I CONGRATULATE you upon Mr. T—'s first book. It does not indeed

* Sir Richard Steele afterwards, in his preface to an edition of the Drummer, a comedy by Mr. Addison, shews it to be his opinion, that "Mr. Addison himself was the person who translated this book."

want its merit ; but I was strangely disappointed in my expectation of a translation nicely true to the original, whereas in those parts where the greatest exactness seems to be demanded, he has been the least careful ; I mean the history of ancient ceremonies and rites, &c. in which you have with great judgment been exact. I am, &c.

LETTER LXII.

Mr. Pope to the Hon. James Craggs, Esq.

July 15, 1715.

I LAY hold of the opportunity given me by my lord duke of Shrewsbury, to assure you of the continuance of that esteem and affection I have long borne you, and the memory of so many agreeable conversations as we have passed together. I wish it were a compliment to say, such conversations are not to be found on this side of the water : for the spirit of dissension is gone forth among us : nor is it a wonder that Button's is no longer Button's, when Old England is no longer Old England, that region of hospitality, society, and good-humour. Party affects us all, even the wits, though they gain as little by politics as they do by their wit. We talk much of fine sense, refined sense, and exalted sense ; but for use and happiness, give me a little common sense. I say this in regard to some gentlemen, professed wits of our acquaintance, who fancy they can make poetry of consequence at this time of day, in the midst of this raging fit of politics. For they tell me, the busy part of the nation are not more divided about whigs and tories, than these idle fellows of the feather about Mr. T—'s and my translation. I (like the tories) have the town in general, that is, the mob, on my side ; but it is usual with the smaller party to make up in industry what they want in number, and that is the case with the little senate of Cato. However, if our principles be well considered, I must appear a brave whig, and Mr. T—a rank tory : I translated Homer for the public in general ; he to gratify the inordinate desires of one man only. We have, it seems, a great Turk in poetry, who can never bear a brother on the throne ; and has his mutes too, a set of noddors, winkers, and whisperers, whose business is to strangle all other offsprings of wit in their birth.

The new translator of Homer is the humblest slave he has, that is to say, his first minister ; let him receive the honours he gives me, but receive them with fear and trembling : let him be proud of the approbation of his absolute lord : I appeal to the people, as my rightful judges and masters ; and if they are not inclined to condemn me, I fear no arbitrary high-flying proceeding from the small court faction at Button's. But after all I have said of this great man there is no rupture between us. We are each of us so civil and obliging, that neither thinks he is obliged : and I, for my part, treat with him, as we do with the grand monarch, who has too many great qualities not to be respected, though we know he watches any occasion to oppress us.

When I talk of Homer, I must not forget the early present you made me of Monsieur de la Motte's book : and I cannot conclude this letter without telling you a melancholy piece of news, which affects our very entrails. L— is dead, and *soupés* are no more ! You see I write in the old familiar way. " This is not to the minister, but to the friend*." However, it is some mark of uncommon regard to the minister, that I steal an expression from a secretary of state. I am, &c.

LETTER LXIII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Congreve.

Jan. 16, 1714-15.

METHINKS when I write to you, I am making a confession ; I have got (I cannot tell how) such a custom of throwing myself out upon paper without reserve. You were not mistaken in what you judged of my temper of mind when I writ last. My faults will not be hid from you, and perhaps it is no dispraise to me that they will not : the cleanness and purity of one's mind is never better proved than in discovering its own fault at first view : as when a stream shews the dirt at its bottom, it shews also the transparency of the water.

My spleen was not occasioned, however, by any thing an abusive angry critic could write of me. I take very kindly your heroic manner of congratulation upon this scandal ; for I think nothing

* Alluding to St. John's letter to Prior, published in the Report of the Secret Committee.

more honourable, than to be involved in the same fate with all the great and the good that ever lived; that is to be envied and censured by bad writers.

You do more than answer my expectations of you in declaring how well you take my freedom, in sometimes neglecting, as I do, to reply to your letters so soon as I ought. Those who have a right taste of the substantial part of friendship, can waive the ceremonial: a friend is the only one that will bear the omission; and one may find who is not so, by the very trial of it.

As to any anxiety I have concerning the fate of my Homer, the care is over with me: the world must be the judge, and I shall be the first to consent to the justice of its judgment, whatever it be. I am not so arrant an author as even to desire, that if I am in the wrong, all mankind should be so.

I am mightily pleased with a saying of Monsieur Turreil:—"When a man writes, he ought to animate himself with the thoughts of pleasing all the world: but he is to renounce that desire or hope the very moment the book goes out of his hands."

I write this from Binfield, whither I came yesterday, having passed a few days in my way with my lord Bolingbroke; I go to London in three days' time, and will not fail to pay a visit to Mr. M——, whom I saw not long since at my lord Halifax's. I hoped from thence he had some hopes of advantage from the present administration: for few people (I think) but I pay respects to great men without any prospects. I am in the fairest way in the world of being not worth a groat, being born both a papist and a poet. This puts me in mind of re-acknowledging your continued endeavours to enrich me. But, I can tell you, it is to no purpose, for without the *opes*, *æquum mi animum ipse parabo*.

LETTER LXIV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Congreve.

March 19, 1714-15.

THE farce of the What-d'ye-call it* has occasioned many different speculations in the town. Some looked upon it as a mere jest upon the tragic poets; others

as a satire upon the late war. Mr. Cromwell, hearing none of the words, and seeing the action to be tragical, was much astonished to find the audience laugh; and says the prince and princess must doubtless be under no less amazement on the same account. Several Templars, and others of the more vociferous kind of critics, went with a resolution to hiss, and confessed they were forced to laugh so much, that they forgot the design they came with. The court in general has, in a very particular manner, come into the jest, and the three first nights (notwithstanding two of them were court nights) were distinguished by very full audiences of the first quality. The common people of the pit and gallery received it at first with great gravity and sedateness, some few with tears; but after the third day they also took the hint, and have ever since been very loud in their claps.—There are still some sober men, who cannot be of the general opinion; but the laughs are so much the majority, that one or two critics seem determined to undeceive the town at their proper cost, by writing grave dissertations against it: to encourage them in which laudable design, it is resolved a preface should be prefixed to the farce, in vindication of the nature and dignity of this new way of writing.

Yesterday, Mr. Steele's affair was decided. I am sorry I can be of no other opinion than yours, as to his whole carriage and writings of late. But certainly he has not only been punished by others, but suffered much even from his own party in the point of character, nor, I believe, received any amends in that of interest, as yet, whatever may be his prospects for the future.

This gentleman, among a thousand others, is a great instance of the fate of all who are carried away by party spirit, of any side. I wish all violence may succeed as ill: but am really amazed that so much of that sour and pernicious quality should be joined with so much natural good-humour as, I think, Mr. Steele is possessed of. I am, &c.

LETTER LXV.

From the same to the same.

April 7, 1715.

MR. POPE is going to Mr. Jervas's, where Mr. Addison is sitting for his picture:

* Written by Gay.

in the mean time, amidst clouds of tobacco at a coffee-house I write this letter. There is a grand revolution at Will's; Morrice has quitted for a coffee-house in the city, and Titcomb is restored, to the great joy of Cromwell, who was at a great loss for a person to converse with upon the fathers and church history: the knowledge I gain from him is entirely in painting and poetry; and Mr. Pope owes all his skill in astronomy to him and Mr. Whiston, so celebrated of late for the discovery of the longitude in an extraordinary copy of verses*. Mr. Rowe's Jane Gray is to be played in Easter-week, when Mrs. Oldfield is to personate a character directly opposite to female nature: for what woman ever despised sovereignty? You know, Chaucer has a tale where a knight saves his head by discovering it was the thing which all women most coveted. Mr. Pope's Homer is retarded by the great rains that have fallen of late, which causes the sheets to be long a-drying: this gives Mr. Lintot great uneasiness, who is now endeavouring to corrupt the curate of his parish to pray for fair weather, that his work may go on. There is a sixpenny criticism lately published upon the tragedy of *What-d'ye-call-it*, wherein he with much judgment and learning calls me a blockhead, and Mr. Pope a knave. His grand charge is against the *Pilgrim's Progress* being read, which he says is directly levelled at Cato's reading Plato; to back this censure, he goes on to tell you, that the *Pilgrim's Progress* being mentioned to be the eighth edition, makes the reflection evident, the tragedy of Cato having just eight times (as he quaintly expresses it) visited the press. He has also endeavoured to shew, that every particular passage of the play alludes to some fine parts of tragedy, which he says I have injudiciously and profanely abused†. Sir Samuel Garth's poem upon my lord Clare's house, I believe, will be published in the Easter week.

Thus far Mr. Gay, who has in his letter forestalled all the subjects of diversion; unless it should be one to you to say, that I sit up till two o'clock over

burgundy and champagne; and am become so much a rake, that I shall be ashamed in a short time to be thought to do any sort of business. I fear I must get the gout by drinking, purely for a fashionable pretence to sit still long enough to translate four books of Homer. I hope you'll by that time be up again, and I may succeed to the bed and couch of my predecessor: pray cause the stuffing to be repaired, and the crutches shortened for me. The calamity of your gout is what all your friends, that is to say, all that know you, must share in; we desire you in your turn to condole with us, who are under a persecution, and much afflicted with a distemper which proves mortal to many poets,—a criticism. We have indeed some relieving intervals of laughter, as you know there are in some diseases; and it is the opinion of divers good guessers, that the last fit will not be more violent than advantageous; for poets assailed by critics are like men bitten by tarantulas, they dance on so much the faster.

Mr. Thomas Burnet hath played the precursor to the coming of Homer, in a treatise called *Homerides*. He has since risen very much in his criticisms, and, after assaulting Homer, made a daring attack upon the *What-d'ye-call-it*‡. Yet there is not a proclamation issued for the burning of Homer and the Pope by the common hangman; nor is the *What-d'ye-call-it* yet silenced by the lord chamberlain. Your, &c.

LETTER LXVI.

Mr. Congreve to Mr. Pope.

May 6.

I HAVE the pleasure of your very kind letter. I have always been obliged to you for your friendship and concern for me, and am more affected with it than I will take upon me to express in this letter. I do assure you there is no return wanting on my part, and am very sorry I had not the good luck to see the dean before I left the town: it is a great pleasure to me, and not a little vanity, to think that he misses me. As to my health, which you are so kind as to inquire after, it is not worse than in London: I am almost afraid yet to say that it is better,

* Called, *An Ode on the Longitude*: in Swift and Pope's *Miscellanies*.

† This curious piece was entitled, *A complete Key to the What-d'ye-call-it*, written by one Griffin, a player, assisted by Lewis Theobald.

‡ In one of his papers called the *Grumbler*.

for I cannot reasonably expect much effect from these waters in so short a time; but in the main they seem to agree with me. Here is not one creature that I know, which, next to the few I would choose, contributes very much to my satisfaction. At the same time that I regret the want of your conversation, I please myself with thinking that you are where you first ought to be, and engaged where you cannot do too much. Pray give my humble service and best wishes to your good mother. I am sorry you do not tell me how Mr. Gay does in his health; I should have been glad to have heard he was better. My young amanuensis, as you call him, I am afraid, will prove but a wooden one; and you know *ex quovis ligno*, &c. You will pardon Mrs. R—'s pedantry, and believe me to be your, &c.

P. S. By the enclosed you will see I am like to be impressed, and enrolled in the list of Mr. Curl's authors; but, I thank God, I shall have your company. I believe it high time you should think of administering another emetic.

LETTER LXVII.

The Rev. Dean Berkley to Mr. Pope.

Leghorn, May, 1714.

As I take ingratitude to be a greater crime than impertinence, I choose rather to run the risk of being thought guilty of the latter, than not to return you my thanks for a very agreeable entertainment you just now gave me. I have accidentally met with your Rape of the Lock here, having never seen it before. Style, painting, judgment, spirit, I had already admired in other of your writings: but in this I am charmed with the magic of your invention, with all those images, allusions, and inexplicable beauties, which you raise so surprisingly, and at the same time so naturally, out of a trifle. And yet I cannot say that I was more pleased with the reading of it than I am with the pretext it gives me to renew in your thoughts the remembrance of one who values no happiness beyond the friendship of men of wit, learning, and good-nature.

I remember to have heard you mention some half-formed design of coming to Italy. What might we not expect from a muse that sings so well in the

bleak climate of England, if she felt the same warm sun and breathed the same air with Virgil and Horace!

There are here an incredible number of poets, that have all the inclination, but want the genius, or perhaps the art, of the ancients. Some among them, who understand English, begin to relish our authors; and I am informed that at Florence they have translated Milton into Italian verse. If one who knows so well how to write like the old Latin poets came among them, it would probably be a means to retrieve them from their cold, trivial conceits, to an imitation of their predecessors.

As merchants, antiquaries, men of pleasure, &c. have all different views in travelling; I know not whether it might not be worth a poet's while to travel, in order to store his mind with strong images of nature.

Green fields and groves, flowery meadows, and purling streams, are nowhere in such perfection as in England; but if you would know lightsome days, warm suns, and blue skies, you must come to Italy; and to enable a man to describe rocks and precipices, it is absolutely necessary that he pass the Alps.

You will easily perceive that it is self-interest makes me so fond of giving advice to one who has no need of it. If you came into these parts I should fly to see you. I am here (by the favour of my good friend the Dean of St. Patrick's) in quality of chaplain to the earl of Peterborough; who about three months since left the greatest part of his family in this town. God knows how long we shall stay here. I am yours, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas in Ireland.

July 9, 1716.

THOUGH, as you rightly remark, I pay my tax but once in a half year, yet you shall see by this letter upon the neck of my last, that I pay a double tax, as we nonjurors ought to do. Your acquaintance on this side of the sea are under terrible apprehensions from your long stay in Ireland, that you may grow too polite for them; for we think (since the great success of such a play as the Non-juror) that politeness is gone over the water. But others are of opinion it has

been longer among you, and was introduced much about the same time with frogs, and with equal success. Poor Poetry! the little that is left of it here, longs to cross the sea, and leave Eusden in full and peaceable possession of the British laurel: and we begin to wish you had the singing of our poets, as well as the croaking of our frogs, to yourselves, in *sæcula sæculorum*. It would be well in exchange if Parnelle, and two or three more of your swans, would come hither; especially that swan, who, like a true modern one, does not sing at all, Dr. Swift. I am (like the rest of the world) a sufferer by his idleness. Indeed I hate that any man should be idle, while I must translate and comment; and I may the more sincerely wish for good poetry from others, because I am become a person out of the question; for a translator is no more a poet than a tailor is a man.

You are, doubtless, persuaded of the validity of that famous verse,

'Tis expectation makes a blessing dear.

But why would you make your friends fonder of you than they are? There is no manner of need of it. We begin to expect you no more than Antichrist; a man that hath absented himself so long from his friends, ought to be put in the Gazette.

Every body here has great need of you. Many faces have died for want of your pencil, and blooming ladies have withered in expecting your return. Even Frank and Betty (that constant pair) cannot console themselves for your absence; I fancy they will be forced to make their own picture in a pretty babe, before you come home: it will be a noble subject for a family piece. Come, then; and having peopled Ireland with a world of beautiful shadows, come to us, and see with what eye (which, like the eye of the world, creates beauties by looking on them), see, I say, how England has altered the airs of all its heads in your absence; and with what sneaking city attitudes our most celebrated personages appear in the mere mortal works of our painters.

Mr. Fortescue is much yours; Gay commemorates you; and lastly (to climb by just steps and degrees) my lord Burlington desires you may be put in mind of him. His gardens flourish, his struc-

tures rise, his pictures arrive, and (what is far more valuable than all) his own good qualities daily extend themselves to all about him; of whom I the meanest (next to some Italian fiddlers and English bricklayers) am a living instance.—Adieu.

LETTER LXIX.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 14, 1716.

IF I had not done my utmost to lead my life so pleasantly as to forget all misfortunes, I should tell you I reckoned your absence no small one; but I hope you have also had many good and pleasant reasons to forget your friends on this side of the world. If a wish could transport me to you and your present companions, I could do the same. Dr. Swift, I believe, is a very good landlord, and a cheerful host at his own table. I suppose he has perfectly learnt himself, what he has taught so many others, *rupta non insanire lagena*, else he would not make a proper host for your humble servant, who (you know) though he drinks a glass as seldom as any man, contrives to break one as often. But it is a consolation to me that I can do this, and many other enormities, under my own roof.

But that you and I are upon equal terms in all friendly laziness, and have taken an inviolable oath to each other, always to do what we will—I should reproach you for so long a silence. The best amends you can make for saying nothing to me, is by saying all the good you can of me, which is, that I heartily love and esteem the Dean and Dr. Parnelle.

Gay is yours and theirs. His spirit is awakened very much in the cause of the Dean, which has broke forth in a courageous couplet or two upon sir Richard Blackmore; he has printed it with his name to it, and bravely assigns no other reason than that the said sir Richard has abused Dr. Swift. I have also suffered in the like cause, and shall suffer more: unless Parnelle sends me his Zoilus and Bookworm (which the bishop of Clogher, I hear, greatly extols) it will be shortly *concurrere bellum atque virum*. I love you all, as much as I despise most wits in this dull country. Ireland has turned the tables upon England; and if

I have no poetical friend in my own nation, I will be as proud as Scipio, and say (since I am reduced to skin and bone) *Ingrata patria, ne ossa quidem habeas.*

LETTER LXX.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas in Ireland.

Nov. 29, 1716.

THAT you have not heard from me of late, ascribe not to the usual laziness of your correspondent, but to a ramble to Oxford, where your name is mentioned with honour, even in a land flowing with stories. I had the good fortune there to be often in the conversation of doctor Clarke: he entertained me with several drawings, and particularly with the original designs of Inigo Jones's Whitehall. I there saw and revered some of your first pieces; which future painters are to look upon as we poets do on the Culex of Virgil and Batrachom of Homer.

Having named this latter piece, give me leave to ask what is become of Dr. Parnelle and his frogs*? *Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis*, might be Horace's wish, but will never be mine, while I have such *meorums* as Dr. Parnelle and Dr. Swift. I hope the spring will restore you to us, and with you all the beauties and colours of nature. Not but I congratulate you on the pleasure you must take in being admired in your own country, which so seldom happens to prophets and poets; but in this you have the advantage of poets; you are master of an art that must prosper and grow rich as long as people love or are proud of themselves, or their own persons. However, you have staid long enough, methinks, to have painted all the numberless histories of old Ogygia. If you have begun to be historical, I recommend to your hand the story which every pious Irishman ought to begin with, that of St. Patrick, to the end you may be obliged (as Dr. P. was when he translated the *Batrachomuomachia*) to come into England, to copy the frogs and such other vermin, as were never seen in that land since the time of that confessor.

I long to see you a history painter. You have already done enough for the private, do something for the public;

* He translated the *Batrachom of Homer*; which is printed among his poems.

and be not confined, like the rest, to draw only such silly stories as our own faces tell of us. The ancients too expect you should do them right; those statues from which you learned your beautiful and noble ideas, demand it as a piece of gratitude from you, to make them truly known to all nations, in the account you intend to write of their characters. I hope you think more warmly than ever of that design.

As to your inquiry about your house; when I come within the walls, they put me in mind of those of Carthage, where your friend, like the wandering Trojan,

Animum pictura pascit inani.

For the spacious mansion, like a Turkish caravanserah, entertains the vagabonds with only bare lodging. I rule the family very ill, keep bad hours, and lend out your pictures about the town. See what it is to have a poet in your house! Frank, indeed, does all he can in such a circumstance; for, considering he has a wild beast in it, he constantly keeps the door chained: every time it is opened the links rattle, the rusty hinges roar. The house seems so sensible that you are its support, that it is ready to drop in your absence; but I still trust myself under its roof, as depending that Providence will preserve so many Raphaels, Titians, and Guidos, as are lodged in your cabinet. Surely the sins of one poet can hardly be so heavy as to bring an old house over the heads of so many painters. In a word, your house is falling; but what of that? I am only a lodger†.

LETTER LXXI.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Fenton.

May 5.

Sir,

I HAD not omitted answering yours of the 18th of last month, but out of a desire to give you some certain and satisfactory account which way, and at what time, you might take your journey. I am now commissioned to tell you, that Mr. Craggs will expect you on the rising of the parliament, which will be as soon as he can receive you in the manner he would receive a man *de Belles Lettres*, that is, in tranquillity and full leisure. I dare say your way of life (which, in my taste, will be the best in the world, and

† Alluding to the story of the Irishman.

with one of the best men in the world) must prove highly to your contentment. And, I must add, it will be still the more a joy to me, as I shall reap a particular advantage from the good I shall have done in bringing you together, by seeing it in my own neighbourhood. Mr. Craggs has taken a house close by mine, whether he proposes to come in three weeks; in the mean time I heartily invite you to live with me: where a frugal and philosophical diet, for a time, may give you a higher relish of that elegant way of life you will enter into after. I desire to know by the first post how soon I may hope for you.

I am a little scandalized at your complaint that your time lies heavy on your hands, when the Muses have put so many good materials into your head to employ them. As to your question, What I am doing? I answer, Just what I have been doing some years,—my duty; secondly, Relieving myself with necessary amusements, or exercises which shall serve me instead of physic as long as they can; thirdly, Reading till I am tired; and lastly, Writing when I have no other thing in the world to do, or no friend to entertain in company.

My mother is, I thank God, the easier, if not the better, for my cares; and I am the happier in that regard, as well as in the consciousness of doing my best. My next felicity is, in retaining the good opinion of honest men, who think me not quite undeserving of it; and in finding no injuries from others hurt me, as long as I know myself. I will add the sincerity with which I act towards ingenuous and undesigning men, and which makes me always (even by a natural bond) their friend; therefore believe me very affectionately your, &c.

LETTER LXXII.

Rev. Dean Berkley to Mr. Pope.*

Naples, Oct. 22, N. S. 1717.

I HAVE long had it in my thoughts to trouble you with a letter, but was discouraged for want of something that I could think worth sending fifteen hundred miles. Italy is such an exhausted

subject, that, I dare say, you would easily forgive my saying nothing of it; and the imagination of a poet is a thing so nice and delicate, that it is no easy matter to find out images capable of giving pleasure to one of the few who (in any age) have come up to that character. I am nevertheless lately returned from an island, where I passed three or four months; which, were it set out in its true colours, might, methinks, amuse you agreeably enough for a minute or two. The island Inarime is an epitome of the whole earth, containing within the compass of eighteen miles, a wonderful variety of hills, vales, ragged rocks, fruitful plains, and barren mountains, all thrown together in a most romantic confusion. The air is in the hottest season constantly refreshed by cool breezes from the sea. The vales produce excellent wheat and Indian corn; but are mostly covered with vineyards, intermixed with fruit trees. Besides the common kinds, as cherries, apricots, peaches, &c. they produce oranges, limes, almonds, pomegranates, figs, water-melons, and many other fruits unknown to our climates, which lie everywhere open to the passenger. The hills are the greater part covered to the top with vines, some with chesnut groves, and others with thickets of myrtle and lentiscus. The fields on the northern side are divided by hedge-rows of myrtle. Several fountains and rivulets add to the beauty of this landscape, which is likewise set off by the variety of some barren spots and naked rocks. But that which crowns the scene is a large mountain rising out of the middle of the island (once a terrible volcano; by the ancients called *Mons Epomeus*); its lower parts are adorned with vines and other fruits; the middle affords pasture to flocks of goats and sheep, and the top is a sandy pointed rock, from which you have the finest prospect in the world, surveying at one view, besides several pleasant islands lying at your feet, a tract of Italy about three hundred miles in length, from the promontory of Antium to the cape of Palinurus; the greater part of which hath been sung by Homer and Virgil, as making a considerable part of the travels and adventures of their two heroes. The islands Caprea, Prochyta, and Parthenope, together with Cajeta, Cumæ, Monte Miseno, the habitations of Circe, the Syrens, and the Læstrigo-

* Afterwards bishop of Cloyne in Ireland, author of the Dialogues of Ilylas and Philinous, the Minute Philosopher.

nes, the bay of Naples, the promontory of Minerva, and the whole Campagna Felice, make but a part of this noble landscape; which would demand an imagination as warm, and numbers as flowing, as your own to describe it. The inhabitants of this delicious isle, as they are without riches and honours, so they are without the vices and follies that attend them; and were they but as much strangers to revenge as they are to avarice and ambition, they might in fact answer the poetical notions of the golden age. But they have got, as an alloy to their happiness, an ill habit of murdering one another on slight offences. We had an instance of this the second night after our arrival—a youth of eighteen being shot dead by our door: and yet by the sole secret of minding our own business, we found a means of living securely among those dangerous people. Would you know how we pass the time at Naples? Our chief entertainment is the devotion of our neighbours: besides the gaiety of their churches (where folks go to see what they call *una bella devotione*, i. e. a sort of religious opera) they make fireworks almost every week, out of devotion; the streets are often hung with arras out of devotion; and (what is still more strange) the ladies invite gentlemen to their houses, and treat them with music and sweetmeats, out of devotion: in a word, were it not for this devotion of its inhabitants, Naples would have little else to recommend it beside the air and situation. Learning is in no very thriving state here, as indeed nowhere else in Italy: however, among many pretenders, some men of taste are to be met with. A friend of mine told me not long since, that being to visit Salvini at Florence, he found him reading your Homer: he liked the notes extremely, and could find no other fault with the version, but that he thought it approached too near a paraphrase, which shews him not to be sufficiently acquainted with our language. I wish you health to go on with that noble work; and when you have that, I need not wish you success. You will do me the justice to believe, that whatever relates to your welfare is sincerely wished by your, &c.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. Pope to * * *.

Dec. 12, 1718.

THE old project of a window in the bosom, to render the soul of man visible, is what every honest friend has manifold reason to wish for; yet even that would not do in our case, while you are so far separated from me, and so long. I begin to fear you will die in Ireland; and that denunciation will be fulfilled upon you, *Hibernus es, et in Hiberniam reverteris*. I should be apt to think you in Sancho's case; some duke has made you governor of an island, or wet place, and you are administering laws to the wild Irish. But I must own, when you talk of building and planting, you touch my string: and I am as apt to pardon you as the fellow, that thought himself Jupiter, would have pardoned the other madman, who called himself his brother Neptune. Alas, sir, do you know whom you talk to? One that has been a poet, was degraded to a translator, and at last, through mere dulness, is turned an architect. You know Martial's censure, *Praconem facito vel architectum*. However, I have one way left; to plan, to elevate, and to surprise, as Bays says. The next news you may expect to hear is, that I am in debt.

The history of my transplantation and settlement, which you desire, would require a volume, were I to enumerate the many projects, difficulties, vicissitudes, and various fates, attending that important part of my life; much more, should I describe the many draughts, elevations, profiles, perspectives, &c. of every palace and garden proposed, intended, and happily raised, by the strength of that faculty wherein all great geniuses excel,—imagination. At last, the gods and fate have fixed me on the borders of the Thames, in the districts of Richmond and Twickenham: it is here I have passed an entire year of my life, without any fixed abode in London, or more than casting a transitory glance (for a day or two at most in a month) on the poms of the town. It is here I hope to receive you, sir, returned from eternizing the Ireland of this age. For you my structures rise; for you my colonnades extend their wings; for you my groves aspire, and roses bloom. And, to say truth, I

hope posterity (which, no doubt, will be made acquainted with all these things) will look upon it as one of the principal motives of my architecture, that it was a mansion prepared to receive you against your own should fall to dust, which is destined to be the tomb of poor Frank and Betty, and the immortal monument of the fidelity of two such servants, who have excelled in constancy the very rats of your family.

What more can I tell you of myself? so much, and yet all put together so little, that I scarce care or know how to do it. But the very reasons that are against putting it upon paper, are as strong for telling it you in person; and I am uneasy to be so long denied the satisfaction of it.

At present I consider you bound in by the Irish sea, like the ghosts in Virgil,

*Tristi palus inamabilis unda
Alligat, et novies Styx circumfusa coerces!*

and I cannot express how I long to renew our old intercourse and conversation, our morning conferences in bed in the same room, our evening walks in the park, our amusing voyages on the water, our philosophical suppers, our lectures, our dissertations, our gravities, our reveries, our fooleries, our what not? This awakens the memory of some of those who have made a part in all these. Poor Parnelle, Garth, Rowe! You justly reprove me for not speaking of the death of the last; Parnelle was too much in my mind, to whose memory I am erecting the best monument I can. What he gave me to publish was but a small part of what he left behind him; but it was the best, and I will not make it worse by enlarging it. I would fain know if he be buried at Chester or Dublin; and what care has been, or is to be taken for his monument, &c. Yet I have not neglected my devoirs to Mr. Rowe: I am writing this very day his epitaph for Westminster Abbey. After these, the best-natured of men, sir Samuel Garth, has left me in the truest concern for his loss. His death was very heroical, and yet unaffected enough to have made a saint or a philosopher famous. But ill tongues and worse hearts have branded even his last moments, as wrongfully as they did his life, with irreligion. You must have heard many tales on this subject; but if ever there was a good Christian, without

knowing himself to be so, it was Dr. Garth. Your, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

*Mr. Pope to * * * *.*

Sept. 17.

THE gaiety of your letter proves you not so studious of wealth as many of your profession are, since you can derive matter of mirth from want of business. You are none of those lawyers who deserve the motto of the devil, *Circuit, quaerens quem devoret*. But your circuit will at least procure you one of the greatest of temporal blessings—health. What an advantageous circumstance is it, for one that loves rambling so well, to be a grave and reputable Rambler! While (like your fellow-circuiteer, the sun) you travel the round of the earth, and behold all the iniquities under the heavens. You are much a superior genius to me in rambling; you, like a pigeon (to which I would sooner compare a lawyer than to a hawk) can fly some hundred leagues at a pitch; I, like a poor squirrel, am continually in motion indeed, but it is about a cage of three foot: my little excursions are like those of a shop-keeper, who walks every day a mile or two before his own door, but minds his business all the while. Your letter of the cause lately before you, I could not but communicate to some ladies of your acquaintance. I am of opinion, if you continued a correspondence of the same sort during a whole circuit, it could not fail to please the sex better than half the novels they read; there would be in them what they love above all things—a most happy union of truth and scandal. I assure you the Bath affords nothing equal to it: it is, on the contrary, full of *grave and sad* men, Mr. Baron S., Lord Chief Justice A., Judge P., and Counsellor B., who has a large pimple on the tip of his nose; but thinks it inconsistent with his gravity to wear a patch, notwithstanding the precedent of an eminent judge. I am, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

Mr. Pope to the Earl of Burlington.

My lord,

If your mare could speak, she would give an account of what extraordinary

company she had on the road; which, since she cannot do, I will.

It was the enterprising Mr. Lintot, the redoubtable rival of Mr. Tonson, who, mounted on a stone-horse (no disagreeable companion to your lordship's mare) overtook me in Windsor forest. He said, he heard I designed for Oxford, the seat of the Muses, and would, as my bookseller, by all means accompany me thither.

I asked him where he got his horse? He answered, he got it of his publisher: "For that rogue, my printer (said he), disappointed me: I hoped to put him into good-humour by a treat at the tavern, of a brown fricasee of rabbits, which cost two shillings, with two quarts of wine, beside my conversation. I thought myself cocksure of his horse, which he readily promised me; but said that Mr. Tonson had just such another design of going to Cambridge, expecting there the copy of a new kind of Horace from Dr. —; and if Mr. Tonson went, he was pre-engaged to attend him, being to have the printing of the said copy.

"So, in short, I borrowed this stone-horse of my publisher, which he had of Mr. Oldmixon for a debt; he lent me too the pretty boy you see after me: he was a smutty dog yesterday, and cost me near two hours to wash the ink off his face; but the devil is a fair-conditioned devil, and very forward in his catechise: if you have any more bags, he shall carry them."

I thought Mr. Lintot's civility not to be neglected; so gave the boy a small bag, containing three shirts, and an Elzevir Virgil; and mounting in an instant proceeded on the road, with my man before, my courteous stationer beside, and the aforesaid devil behind.

Mr. Lintot began in this manner: "Now, damn them! what if they should put it into the newspaper how you and I went together to Oxford; what would I care? If I should go down into Sussex, they would say I was gone to the Speaker. But what of that? If my son were but big enough to go on with the business, by G—d, I would keep as good company as old Jacob."

Hereupon I inquired of his son. "The lad (says he) has fine parts, but is somewhat sickly, much as you are—I spare for nothing in his education at Westminster. Pray do not you think

Westminster to be the best school in England? Most of the late ministry came out of it, so did many of this ministry. I hope the boy will make his fortune."

"Do not you design to let him pass a year at Oxford?"—"To what purpose? (said he) The universities do but make pedants; and I intend to breed him a man of business."

As Mr. Lintot was talking, I observed he sat uneasy on his saddle, for which I expressed some solicitude: "Nothing," says he; "I can bear it well enough: but since we have the day before us, methinks it would be very pleasant for you to rest a while under the woods."—When we were alighted: "See here what a mighty pretty Horace I have in my pocket! what if you amused yourself in turning an ode, till we mount again? Lord! if you pleased, what a clever miscellany might you make at leisure hours?"—"Perhaps I may," said I, "if we ride on; the motion is an aid to my fancy, a round trot very much awakens my spirits: then jog on apace, and I will think as hard as I can."

Silence ensued for a full hour; after which Mr. Lintot lugged the reins, stopped short, and broke out, "Well, sir, how far have you gone?" I answered, "Seven miles."—"Zounds, sir (said Lintot), I thought you had done seven stanzas. Oldsworth, in a ramble round Wimbledon Hill, would translate a whole ode in half this time. I will say that for Oldsworth (though I lost by his Timothy's), he translates an ode of Horace the quickest of any man in England. I remember Dr. King would write verses in a tavern three hours after he could not speak: and there's sir Richard, in that rumbling old chariot of his, between Fleet Ditch and St. Giles's Pound shall make you half a job."

"Pray, Mr. Lintot (said I), now you talk of translators, what is your method of managing them?"—"Sir (replied he), those are the saddest pack of rogues in the world: in a hungry fit, they will swear they understand all the languages in the universe. I have known one of them to take down a Greek hook upon my counter, and cry, 'Ay, this is Hebrew, I must read it from the latter end.' By G—d I can never be sure in these fellows,

for I neither understand Greek, Latin, French, nor Italian myself. But this is my way: I agree with them for ten shillings per sheet, with a proviso, that I will have their doings corrected by whom I please; so by one or other they are led at last to the true sense of an author; my judgment giving a negative to all my translators.”—“But how are you secure those correctors may not impose upon you?”—“Why, I get any civil gentleman (especially any Scotchman) that comes into my shop, to read the original to me in English; by this I know whether my first translator be deficient, and whether my corrector merits his money or not.

“I will tell you what happened to me last month: I bargained with S— for a new version of Lucretius, to publish against Tonson’s; agreeing to pay the author so many shillings at his producing so many lines. He made a great progress in a very short time, and I gave it to the corrector to compare with the Latin; but he went directly to Creech’s translation, and found it the same, word for word, all but the first page. Now, what do you think I did? I arrested the translator for a cheat; nay, and I stopt the corrector’s pay too, upon this proof that he had made use of Creech instead of the original.”

“Pray tell me next how you deal with the critics.”—“Sir (said he), nothing more easy. I can silence the most formidable of them: the rich ones for a sheet a piece of the blotted manuscript, which costs me nothing; they will go about with it to their acquaintance, and pretend they had it from the author, who submitted to their correction: this has given some of them such an air, that in time they come to be consulted with, and dedicated to as the top critics of the town. As for the poor critics, I will give you one instance of my management, by which you may guess at the rest. A lean man, that looked like a very good scholar, came to me the other day; he turned over your Homer, shook his head, shrugged up his shoulders, and pished at every line of it: ‘One would wonder (says he) at the strange presumption of some men; Homer is no such easy task, that every stripling, every versifier—’ He was going on, when my wife called to dinner. ‘Sir (said I), will you please to eat a piece of beef with me?’—‘Mr. Lintot

(said he), I am sorry you should be at the expense of this great book, I am really concerned on your account—’ ‘Sir, I am much obliged to you: if you can dine upon a piece of beef, together with a slice of pudding—’ ‘Mr. Lintot, I do not say but Mr. Pope, if he would condescend to advise with men of learning—’ ‘Sir, the pudding is upon the table, if you please to go in.’—My critic complies: he comes to a taste of your poetry, and tells me in the same breath, that the book is commendable and the pudding excellent.

“Now, sir (concluded Mr. Lintot), in return to the frankness I have shewn, pray tell me, is it the opinion of your friends at court that my lord Lansdown will be brought to the bar or not?” I told him, I heard he would not, and I hoped it, my lord being one I owed particular obligations to. “That may be (replied Mr. Lintot); but by God, if he is not, I shall lose the printing of a very good trial.”

These, my lord, are a few traits, by which you may discern the genius of Mr. Lintot, which I have chosen for the subject of a letter. I dropt him as soon as I got to Oxford, and paid a visit to my lord Carleton at Middleton.

The conversations I enjoy here are not to be prejudiced by my pen, and the pleasures from them only to be equalled when I meet your lordship. I hope in a few days to cast myself from your horse at your feet. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

Mr. Pope to the Duke of Buckingham.

[In answer to a letter in which he inclosed the description of Buckingham House, written by him to the D. of Sh.]

PLINY was one of those few authors who had a warm house over his head, nay two houses, as appears by two of his epistles. I believe, if any of his contemporary authors durst have informed the public where they lodged, we should have found the garrets of Rome as well inhabited as those of Fleet Street; but it is dangerous to let creditors into such a secret, therefore we may presume that then, as well as now-a-days, nobody knew where they lived but their booksellers.

It seems that when Virgil came to

Rome he had no lodging at all: he first introduced himself to Augustus by an epigram, beginning *Nocte pluit toto*—an observation which probably he had not made, unless he had lain all night in the street.

Where Juvenal lived we cannot affirm; but in one of his satires he complains of the excessive price of lodgings; neither do I believe he would have talked so feelingly of Codrus's bed, if there had been room for a bedfellow in it.

I believe, with all the ostentation of Pliny, he would have been glad to have changed both his houses for your grace's one; which is a country house in the summer, and a town house in the winter, and must be owned to be the properest habitation for a wise man, who sees all the world change every season, without ever changing himself.

I have been reading the description of Pliny's house, with an eye to yours; but finding they will bear no comparison, will try if it can be matched by the large country seat I inhabit at present, and see what figure it may make by the help of a florid description.

You must expect nothing regular in my description, any more than in the house; the whole vast edifice is so disjointed, and the several parts of it so detached one from the other, and yet so joining again, one cannot tell how, that, in one of my poetical fits, I imagined it had been a village in Amphion's time, where the cottages, having taken a country dance together, had been all out, and stood stone still with amazement ever since.

You must excuse me, if I say nothing of the front; indeed I do not know which it is. A stranger would be grievously disappointed, who endeavoured to get into the house the right way. One would reasonably expect after the entry through the porch to be let into the hall: alas, nothing less! you find yourself in the house of office. From the parlour you think to step into the drawing room; but upon opening the iron-nailed door, you are convinced by a flight of birds about your ears, and a cloud of dust in your eyes, that it is the pigeon house. If you come into the chapel, you find its altars, like those of the ancients, continually smoking, but it is with the steams of the adjoining kitchen.

The great hall within is high and spacious, flanked on one side with a very long table, a true image of ancient hospitality: the walls are all over ornamented with monstrous horns of animals, about twenty broken pikes, ten or a dozen blunderbusses, and a rusty match-lock musket or two, which we were informed had served in the civil wars. Here is one vast arched window beautifully darkened with divers escutcheons of painted glass: one shining pane in particular bears date 1286, which alone preserves the memory of a knight whose iron armour is long since perished with rust, and whose alabaster nose is mouldered from his monument. The face of Dame Eleanor, in another piece, owes more to that single pane than to all the glasses she ever consulted in her life. After this, who can say that glass is frail, when it is not half so frail as human beauty or glory! and yet I cannot but sigh to think that the most authentic record of so ancient a family should lie at the mercy of every infant who flings a stone. In former days there have dined in this hall gartered knights, and courtly dames, attended by ushers, sewers, and seneschals; and yet it was but last night that an owl flew hither, and mistook it for a barn.

This hall lets you (up and down) over a very high threshold into the great parlour. Its contents are a broken-bellied virginal, a couple of crippled velvet chairs, with two or three mildewed pictures of mouldy ancestors, who look as dismally as if they came fresh from hell with all their brimstone about them; these are carefully set at the farther corner, for the windows being everywhere broken, made it so convenient a place to dry poppies and mustard-seed, that the room is appropriated to that use.

Next this parlour, as I said before, lies the pigeon house, by the side of which runs an entry, which lets you on one hand and the other into a bed-chamber, a buttery, and a small hole called the chaplain's study: then follow a brewhouse, a little green-and-gilt parlour, and the great stairs, under which is the dairy: a little farther on the right the servants' hall; and by the side of it, up six steps, the old lady's closet for her private devotions, which

has a lattice into the hall; intended (as we imagine) that at the same time as she prayed, she might have an eye upon the men and maids. There are upon the ground floor, in all, twenty-six apartments, among which I must not forget a chamber which has in it a large quantity of timber, that seems to have been either a bedstead or a cyder-press.

The kitchen is built in form of the Rotunda, being one vast vault to the top of the house; where one aperture serves to let out the smoke and let in the light. by the blackness of the walls, the circular fires, vast cauldrons, yawning mouths of ovens and furnaces, you would think it either the forge of Vulcan, the cave of Polypheme, or the temple of Moloch. The horror of this place has made such an impression on the country people, that they believe the witches keep their Sabbath here, and that once a year the devil treats them with infernal venison, a roasted tyger stuffed with ten-penny nails.

Above stairs we have a number of rooms: you never pass out of one into another but by the ascent or descent of two or three stairs. Our best room is very long and low, of the exact proportion of a band box. In most of these rooms there are hangings of the finest work in the world, that is to say, those which Arachne spins from her own bowels. Were it not for this only furniture, the whole would be a miserable scene of naked walls, flawed ceilings, broken windows, and rusty locks. The roof is so decayed, that, after a favourable shower, we may expect a crop of mushrooms between the chinks of our floors. All the doors are as little and low as those to the cabins of packet boats. These rooms have for many years had no other inhabitants than certain rats, whose very age renders them worthy of this seat; for the very rats of this venerable house are grey. Since these have not yet quitted it, we hope, at least, that this ancient mansion may not fall during the small remnant these poor animals have to live, who are now too infirm to remove to another. There is yet a small subsistence left them in the few remaining books of the library.

We had never seen half what I have described, but for a starched grey-headed

steward, who is as much an antiquity as any in this place, and looks like an old family-picture walked out of its frame. He entertained us as we passed from room to room with several relations of the family; but his observations were particularly curious when he came to the cellar: he informed us where stood the triple row of butts of sack, and where were ranged the bottles of tent, for toasts in a morning: he pointed to the stands that supported the iron hooped hogsheds of strong beer: then stepping to a corner, he lugged out the tattered fragments of an unframed picture: "This (says he, with tears) was poor sir Thomas! once master of all this drink. He had two sons, poor young masters, who never arrived to the age of his beer; they both fell ill in this very room, and never went out on their own legs." He could not pass by a heap of broken bottles without taking up a piece to shew us the arms of the family upon it. He then led us up the tower by dark winding stone steps, which landed us into several little rooms, one above another. One of these was nailed up; and our guide whispered to us, as a secret, the occasion of it. It seems the course of this noble blood was a little interrupted about two centuries ago, by a freak of the lady Frances, who was here taken in the fact with a neighbouring prior; ever since which the room has been nailed up, and branded with the name of the Adultery Chamber. The ghost of lady Frances is supposed to walk there; and some prying maids of the family report that they have seen a lady in fardingale through the key-hole; but this matter is hushed up, and the servants are forbid to talk of it.

I must needs have tired you by this long description: but what engaged me in it, was a generous principle to preserve the memory of that which itself must soon fall into dust; nay, perhaps part of it, before this letter reaches your hands.

Indeed we owe this old house the same kind of gratitude that we do to an old friend who harbours us in his declining condition, nay even in his last extremities. How fit is this retreat for uninterrupted study, where no one that passes by can dream there is an inhabitant, and even those who would dine with us dare

not stay under our roof! Any one that sees it will own I could not have chosen a more likely place to converse with the dead in. I had been mad indeed if I had left your grace for any one but Homer. But when I return to the living, I shall have the sense to endeavour to converse with the best of them, and shall therefore, as soon as possible, tell you in person how much I am, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

The Duke of Buckingham to Mr. Pope.

You desire my opinion as to the late dispute in France concerning Homer: and I think it excuseable (at an age, alas! of not much pleasure) to amuse myself a little in taking notice of a controversy, than which nothing is at present more remarkable (even in a nation who value themselves so much upon the *belles lettres*), both on account of the illustrious subject of it, and of the two persons engaged in the quarrel.

The one is extraordinary in all the lyric kind of poetry, even in the opinion of his very adversary. The other, a lady (and of more value for being so) not only of great learning, but with a genius admirably turned to that sort of it which most becomes her sex, for softness, gentleness, and promoting of virtue; and such (as one would think) is not so liable as other parts of scholarship to rough disputes or violent animosity.

Yet it has so happened, that no writers, even about divinity itself, have been more outrageous or uncharitable than these two polite authors; by suffering their judgments to be a little warped (if I may use that expression) by the heat of their eager inclinations to attack or defend so great an author under debate. I wish for the sake of the public, which is now so well entertained by their quarrel, it may not end at last in their agreeing to blame a third man, who is not so presumptuous as to censure both, if they should chance to hear it.

To begin with matter of fact: M. d'Acier has well judged, that the best of all poets certainly deserved a better translation, at least into French prose, because to see it done in verse was despaired of: I believe, indeed, from a defect in that language, incapable of mount-

ing to any degree of excellence suitable to so very great an undertaking.

She has not only performed this task as well as prose can do it (which is indeed but as the wrong side of tapestry is able to represent the right), but she has added to it also many learned and useful annotations. With all which she most obligingly delighted not only her own sex, but most of ours, ignorant of the Greek, and consequently her adversary himself, who frankly acknowledges that ignorance.

It is no wonder, therefore, if in doing this she is grown so enamoured of that unspeakably charming author, as to have a kind of horror at the least mention of a man bold enough to blame him.

Now as to M. de la Motte, he, being already deservedly famous for all sorts of lyric poetry, was so far introduced by her into those beauties of the epic kind (though but in that way of translation), as not to resist the pleasure and hope of reputation, by attempting that in verse which had been applauded so much for the difficulty of doing it even in prose: knowing how this, well executed, must extremely transcend the other.

But as great poets are a little apt to think they have an ancient right of being excused for vanity on all occasions, he was not content to outdo M. d'Acier, but endeavoured to outdo Homer himself, and all that ever in any age or nation went before him in the same enterprise; by leaving out, altering, or adding whatever he thought best.

Against this presumptuous attempt, Homer has been in all times so well defended, as not to need my small assistance; yet I must needs say, his excellencies are such, that for their sakes he deserves a much gentler touch for his seeming errors. These if M. de la Motte had translated as well as the rest, with an apology for having retained them only out of mere veneration, his judgment, in my opinion, would have appeared much greater than by the best of his alterations, though I admit them to be written very finely. I join with M. de la Motte in wondering at some odd things in Homer, but it is chiefly because of his sublime ones; I was about to say his divine ones, which almost surprise me at finding him any where in the fallible condition of human nature.

And now we are wondering, I am in a difficulty to guess what can be the reason of these exceptions against Homer, from one who has himself translated him, contrary to the general custom of translators. Is there not a little of that in it? I mean, to be singular, in getting above the title of a translator, though sufficiently honourable in this case. For such an ambition nobody has less occasion than one who is so fine a poet in other kinds; and who must have too much wit to believe any alteration of another can entitle him to the denomination of an epic poet himself: though no man in this age seems more capable of being a good one, if the French tongue would bear it. Yet in his translation he has done too well to leave any doubt (with all his faults) that hers can be ever paralleled with it.

Besides, he could not be ignorant that finding faults is the most easy and vulgar part of a critic; whereas nothing shews so much skill and taste both, as the being thoroughly sensible of the sublimest excellencies.

What can we say in excuse of all this? *Humanum est errare*: since as good a poet as I believe the French language is capable of, and as sharp a critic as any nation can produce, has, by too much censuring Homer, subjected a translation to censure, that would have otherwise stood the test of the severest adversary.

But since he would needs choose that wrong way of criticism, I wonder he missed a stone so easy to be thrown against Homer, not for his filling the *Iliad* with so much slaughter (for that is to be excused, since a war is not capable of being described without it), but with so many various particulars of wounds and horror, as shew the writer (I am afraid) so delighted that way himself, as not the least to doubt his reader being so also:—like Spanioletta, whose dismal pictures are the more disagreeable, for being always so very movingly painted. Even Hector's last parting from his son and Andromache, hardly makes us amend for his body being dragged thrice round the town. M. de la Motte, in his strongest objections about that dismal combat, has sufficient cause to blame his enraged adversary; who here gives an instance that it is impossible to be violent without committing some mistake; her passion for Homer blinding her too much to

perceive the very grossest of his failings. By which warning I am become a little more capable of impartiality, though in a dispute about that very poet for whom I have the greatest veneration.

M. d'Acier might have considered a little, that whatever were the motives of M. de la Motte to so bold a proceeding, it could not darken that fame which I am sure she thinks shines securely even after the vain attempts of Plato himself against it: caused only perhaps by a like reason with that of Madame d'Acier's anger against M. de la Motte, namely, the finding that in his prose his genius (great as it was) could not be capable of the sublime heights of poetry, which therefore he banished out of his commonwealth.

Nor were these objections to Homer any more lessening of her merit in translating him, as well as that way is capable of, *viz.* fully, plainly, and elegantly, than the most admirable verses can be any disparagement to as excellent prose.

The best excuse for all this violence is, its being in a cause which gives a kind of reputation even to suffering, notwithstanding ever so ill a management of it.

The worst of defending even Homer in such a passionate manner, is, its being more a proof of her weakness, than of his being liable to none. For what is it can excuse Homer, any more than Hector, for flying at the first sight of Achilles? whose terrible aspect sure needed not such an inexcusable fright to set it off; and methinks all that account of Minerva's restoring his dart to Achilles, comes a little too late for excusing Hector's so terrible apprehension at the very first.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Mr. Pope to the Duke of Buckingham.

Sept. 1, 1718.

I AM much honoured by your grace's compliance with my request, in giving me your opinion of the French dispute concerning Homer; and I shall keep my word, in fairly telling wherein I disagree from you. It is but in two or three very small points, not so much of the dispute as of the parties concerned in it. I cannot think quite so highly of the lady's

learning, though I respect it very much. It is great complaisance in that polite nation to allow her to be a critic of equal rank with her husband. To instance no further, his remarks on Horace shew more good sense, penetration, and a better taste of his author, and those upon Aristotle's Art of Poetry more skill and science, than any of hers on any author whatever. In truth, they are much more slight, dwell more in generals, and are besides, for the most part, less her own; of which her remarks upon Homer are an example, where Eustathius is transcribed ten times for once that he is quoted. Nor is there at all more depth of learning in those upon Terence, Plautus, or (where they were most wanted) upon Aristophanes; only the Greek scholia upon the latter are some of the best extant.

Your grace will believe me, that I did not search to find defects in a lady; my employment upon the Iliad forced me to see them; yet I have had so much of the French complaisance as to conceal her thefts; for wherever I have found her notes to be wholly another's (which is the case in some hundreds) I have barely quoted the true proprietor, without observing upon it. If Madamed'Acier has ever seen my observations, she will be sensible of this conduct; but what effect it may have upon a lady, I will not answer for.

In the next place, as to M. de la Motte, I think your grace hardly does him right, in supposing he could have no idea of the beauty of Homer's epic poetry but what he learned from Madame d'Acier's prose translation. There had been a very elegant prose translation before, that of Monsieur de la Valterie; so elegant, that the style of it was evidently the original and model of the famous Telemaque. Your grace very justly animadverted against the too great disposition of finding faults in the one, and of confessing none in the other. But doubtless, as to violence, the lady has infinitely the better of the gentleman. Nothing can be more polite, dispassionate, or sensible, than M. de la Motte's manner of managing the dispute: and so much as I see your grace admires the beauty of his verse (in which you have the suffrage too of the archbishop of Cambray), I will venture to say, his prose is full as good. I think therefore when you say, No disputants, even in divinity,

could be more outrageous and uncharitable than these two authors, you are a little too hard upon M. de la Motte. Not but that (with your grace) I doubt as little of the zeal of commentators as of the zeal of divines, and am as ready to believe of the passions and pride of mankind in general, that (did but the same interest go along with them) they would carry the learned world to as violent extremes, animosities, and even persecutions, about a variety of opinions in criticism, as ever they did about religion; and that, in defect of Scripture to quarrel upon, we should have the French, Italian, and Dutch commentators ready to burn one another about Homer, Virgil, Terence, and Horace.

I do not wonder your grace is shocked at the flight of Hector upon the first appearance of Achilles, in the twenty-second Iliad. However (to shew myself a true commentator, if not a true critic) I will endeavour to excuse, if not to defend it, in my notes on that book: and to save myself what trouble I can, instead of doing it in this letter, I will draw up the substance of what I have to say for it in a separate paper, which I'll shew your grace when we next meet. I will only desire you to allow me, that Hector was in an absolute certainty of death, and depressed over and above with the conscience of being in an ill cause. If your heart be so great, as not to grant the first of these will sink the spirit of a hero, you will at least be so good as to allow the second may. But I can tell your grace, no less a hero than my lord Peterborough, when a person complimented him for never being afraid, made this answer; "Sir, shew me a danger that I think an imminent and real one, and I promise you I will be as much afraid as any of you." I am your grace's, &c.

LETTER LXXIX.

Dr. Arbuthnot to Mr. Pope.

London, Sept. 7, 1714.

I AM extremely obliged to you for taking notice of a poor old distrest courtier, commonly the most despicable thing in the world. This blow has so roused Scriblerus, that he has recovered his senses, and thinks and talks like other men. From being frolicsome and gay,

he is turned grave and morose. His lucubrations lie neglected among old newspapers, cases, petitions, and abundance of unanswerable letters. I wish to God they had been among the papers of a noble lord sealed up. Then might Scriblerus have passed for the Pretender, and it would have been a most excellent and laborious work for the Flying Post, or some such author, to have allegorized all his adventures into a plot, and found out mysteries somewhat like the Key to the Lock. Martin's office is now the second door on the left hand in Dover-street, where he will be glad to see Dr. Parnelle, Mr. Pope, and his old friends, to whom he can still afford a half pint of claret. It is with some pleasure that he contemplates the world still busy, and all mankind at work for him. I have seen a letter from dean Swift; he keeps up his noble spirit, and though like a man knocked down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries. I will add no more, in haste, only that I will never forgive you if you do not use my aforesaid house in Dover-street with the same freedom as you did that in St. James's; for as our friendship was not begun upon the relation of a courtier, so I hope it will not end with it. I will always be proud to be reckoned amongst the number of your friends and humble servants.

LETTER LXXX.

Mr. Pope to Dr. Arbuthnot.

Sept. 10.

I AM glad your travels delighted you; improve you I am sure they could not: you are not so much a youth as that, though you run about with a king of sixteen, and (what makes him still more a child) a king of Frenchmen. My own time has been more melancholy, spent in an attendance upon death, which has seized one of our family: my mother is something better, though at her advanced age, every day is a climacteric. There was joined to this an indisposition of my own, which I ought to look upon as a slight one compared with my mother's, because my life is not of half the consequence to any body that hers is to me. All these incidents have hindered my more speedy reply to your obliging letter.

The article you inquire of, is of as little concern to me as you desire it should; namely, the railing papers about the Odyssey. If the book has merit, it will extinguish all such nasty scandal; as the sun puts an end to stinks, merely by coming out.

I wish I had nothing to trouble me more; an honest mind is not in the power of any dishonest one. To break its peace, there must be some guilt or consciousness, which is inconsistent with its own principles. Not but malice and injustice have their day, like some poor short-lived vermin that die in shooting their own stings. Falsehood is folly (says Homer); and liars and calumniators at last hurt none but themselves, even in this world: in the next, it is charity to say, God have mercy on them! they were the devil's vicegerents upon earth, who is the father of lies, and, I fear, has a right to dispose of his children.

I have had an occasion to make these reflections of late more justly than from any thing that concerns my writings; for it is one that concerns my morals, and (which I ought to be as tender of as my own) the good character of another very innocent person, who I am sure shares your friendship no less than I do. No creature has better natural dispositions, or could act more rightly or reasonably in every duty, did she act by herself, or from herself; but you know it is the misfortune of that family to be governed like a ship, I mean the head guided by the tail, and that by every wind that blows in it.

LETTER LXXXI.

Mr. Pope to the Earl of Oxford.

Oct. 21, 1721.

My lord,

YOUR lordship may be surprised at the liberty I take in writing to you: though you will allow me always to remember, that you once permitted me that honour, in conjunction with some others who better deserved it. I hope you will not wonder I am still desirous to have you think me your grateful and faithful servant; but, I own, I have an ambition yet farther, to have others think me so, which is the occasion I give your lordship the trouble of this. Poor Parnelle,

before he died, left me the charge of publishing these few remains of his; I have a strong desire to make them, their author, and their publisher, more considerable, by addressing and dedicating them all to you. There is a pleasure in bearing testimony to truth, and a vanity, perhaps, which, at least, is as excusable as any vanity can be. I beg you, my lord, to allow me to gratify it in prefixing this paper of honest verses to the book. I send the book itself, which, I dare say, you will receive more satisfaction in perusing, than you can from any thing written upon the subject of yourself. Therefore I am a good deal in doubt, whether you will care for such an addition to it. All I say for it is, that it is the only dedication I ever writ, and shall be the only one, whether you accept of it or not: for I will not bow the knee to a less man than my lord Oxford; and I expect to see no greater in my time.

After all, if your lordship will tell my lord Harley that I must not do this, you may depend upon a suppression of these verses (the only copy whereof I send you); but you never shall suppress that great, sincere, and entire respect, with which I am always, my lord, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXII.

The Earl of Oxford to Mr. Pope.

Brampton Castle, Nov. 6, 1721.

Sir,

I RECEIVED your packet, which could not but give me great pleasure, to see you preserve an old friend in your memory: for it must needs be very agreeable to be remembered by those we highly value. But then how much shame did it cause me, when I read your very fine verses inclosed! My mind reproached me how far short I came of what your great friendship and delicate pen would partially describe me. You ask my consent to publish it: to what straits doth this reduce me! I look back indeed to those evenings I have usefully and pleasantly spent with Mr. Pope, Mr. Parnelle, dean Swift, the Doctor, &c. I should be glad the world knew you admitted me to your friendship; and since your affection is too hard for your judgment, I am contented to let the world know how well Mr. Pope can write upon a barren

subject. I return you an exact copy of the verses, that I may keep the original, as a testimony of the only error you have been guilty of. I hope very speedily to embrace you in London, and to assure you of the particular esteem and friendship wherewith I am your, &c.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq.

August 27, 1714.

WHATEVER studies on the one hand, or amusements on the other, it shall be my fortune to fall into, I shall be equally incapable of forgetting you in any of them. The task I undertook, though of weight enough in itself, has had a voluntary increase by the enlarging my design of the Notes; and the necessity of consulting a number of books has carried me to Oxford; but I fear, through my lord Harcourt and Dr. Clark's means, I shall be more conversant with the pleasures and company of the place, than with the books and manuscripts of it.

I find still more reason to complain of the negligence of the geographers in their maps of old Greece, since I looked upon two or three more noted names in the public libraries here. But with all the care I am capable of, I have some cause to fear the engraver will prejudice me in a few situations. I have been forced to write to him in so high a style, that were my epistle intercepted, it would raise no small admiration in an ordinary man. There is scarce an order in it of less importance than to remove such and such mountains, alter the course of such and such rivers, place a large city on such a coast, and raise another in another country. I have set bounds to the sea, and said to the land, Thus far shalt thou advance, and no farther*. In the mean time, I, who talk and command at this rate, am in danger of losing my horse; and stand in some fear of a country justice†. To disarm me indeed may be but prudential, considering what armies I have at present on foot, and in my service:—a hundred

* This relates to the map of ancient Greece, laid down by our author in his observations on the second Iliad.

† Some of the laws were, at this time, put in force against the papists.

thousand Grecians are no contemptible body; for all that I can tell, they may be as formidable as four thousand priests; and they seem proper forces to send against those in Barcelona. That siege deserves as fine a poem as the Iliad, and the machining part of poetry would be the juster in it, as they say the inhabitants expect angels from heaven to their assistance. May I venture to say, who am a papist, and say to you who are a papist, that nothing is more astonishing to me than that people, so greatly warmed with a sense of liberty, should be capable of harbouring such weak superstition, and that so much folly can inhabit the same breasts!

I could not but take a trip to London on the death of the queen, moved by the common curiosity of mankind, who leave their own business to be looking upon that of other men. I thank God that, as for myself, I am below all the accidents of state-changes by my circumstances, and above them by my philosophy. Common charity of man to man, and universal good-will to all, are the points I have most at heart; and I am sure, those are not to be broken for the sake of any governors or government. I am willing to hope the best; and what I more wish than my own or any particular man's advancement is, that this turn may put an end entirely to the divisions of whig and tory; that the parties may love each other as well as I love them both, or at least hurt each other as little as I would either: and that our own people may live as quietly as we shall certainly let theirs; that is to say, that want of power itself in us may not be a surer prevention of harm, than want of will in them. I am sure, if all whigs and all tories had the spirit of one Roman Catholic that I know, it would be well for all Roman Catholics; and if all Roman Catholics had always had that spirit, it had been well for all others; and we had never been charged with so wicked a spirit as that of persecution.

I agree with you in my sentiments of the state of our nation since this change: I find myself just in the same situation of mind you describe as your own; heartily wishing the good, that is, the quiet of my country, and hoping a total end of all the unhappy divisions of mankind by party-spirit, which at best is but the madness of many for the gain of a few. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Edward Blount, Esq. to Mr. Pope.

It is with a great deal of pleasure I see your letter, dear sir, written in a style that shews you full of health, and in the midst of diversions; I think those two things necessary to a man who has such undertakings in hand as yours. All lovers of Homer are indebted to you for taking so much pains about the situation of his hero's kingdoms: it will not only be of great use with regard to his works, but to all that read any of the Greek historians; who generally are ill understood through the difference of the maps as to the places they treat of, which makes one think one author contradicts another. You are going to set us right; and it is an advantage every body will gladly see you engross the glory of.

You can draw rules to be free and easy from formal pedants; and teach men to be short and pertinent from tedious commentators. However, I congratulate your happy deliverance from such authors as you (with all your humanity) cannot wish alive again to converse with. Critics will quarrel with you, if you dare to please without their leave; and zealots will shrug up their shoulders at a man that pretends to go to heaven out of their form, dress, and diet. I would no more make a judgment of an author's genius from a damning critic, than I would of a man's religion from an unsaving zealot.

I could take great delight in affording you the new glory of making a *Barceloniad* (if I may venture to coin such a word): I fancy you would find a juster parallel than it seems at first sight: for the Trojans too had a great mixture of folly with their bravery; and I am out of countenance for them, when I read the wise result of their council, where, after a warm debate between Antenor and Paris, about restoring Helen, Priam sagely determines that they shall go to supper. And as for the Greeks, what can equal their superstition in sacrificing an innocent lady!

Tantum religio potuit, &c.

I have a good opinion of my politics, since they agree with a man who always thinks so justly as you. I wish it were in our power to persuade all the nation

into as calm and steady a disposition of mind.

We have received the late melancholy news, with the usual ceremony, of condoling in one breath for the loss of a gracious queen, and in another rejoicing for an illustrious king. My views carry me no farther than to wish the peace and welfare of my country; and my morals and politics teach me to leave all that to be adjusted by our representatives above, and to Divine Providence. It is much at one to you and me who sit at the helm, provided they will permit us to sail quietly in the great ship. Ambition is a vice that is timely mortified in us poor papists; we ought in recompence to cultivate as many virtues in ourselves as we can, that we may be truly great. Among my ambitions, that of being a sincere friend is one of the chief: yet I will confess that I have a secret pleasure to have some of my descendants know that their ancestor was great with Mr. Pope. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXV.

Edward Blount, Esq. to Mr. Pope.

Nov. 15, 1715.

It is an agreement of long date between you and me, that you should do with my letters just as you pleased, and answer them at your leisure; and that is as soon as I shall think you ought. I have so true a taste of the substantial part of your friendship, that I wave all ceremonials; and am sure to make you as many visits as I can, and leave you to return them whenever you please, assuring you they shall at all times be heartily welcome to me.

The many alarms we have from your parts, have no effect upon the genius that reigns in our country, which is happily turned to preserve peace and quiet among us. What a dismal scene has there been opened in the north! What ruin have those unfortunate rash gentlemen drawn upon themselves and their miserable followers, and perchance upon many others too, who upon no account would be their followers! However, it may look ungenerous to reproach people in distress. I do not remember you and I ever used to trouble ourselves about politics; but when any matter happened to fall into our discourse, we used to

condemn all undertakings that tended towards the disturbing the peace and quiet of our country, as contrary to the notions we had of morality and religion, which oblige us on no pretence whatsoever to violate the laws of charity. How many lives have there been lost in hot blood! and how many more are there like to be taken off in cold! If the broils of the nation affect you, come down to me, and though we are farmers, you know Eumeus made his friends welcome. You shall here worship the echo at your ease; indeed we are forced to do so, because we cannot hear the first report, and therefore are obliged to listen to the second; which, for security's sake, I do not always believe neither.

It is a great many years since I fell in love with the character of Pomponius Atticus: I longed to imitate him a little, and have contrived hitherto to be, like him, engaged in no party, but to be a faithful friend to some in both. I find myself very well in this way hitherto, and live in a certain peace of mind by it, which, I am persuaded, brings a man more content than all the perquisites of wild ambition. I with pleasure join with you in wishing, nay I am not ashamed to say in praying, for the welfare, temporal and eternal, of all mankind. How much more affectionately then shall I do so for you, since I am in a most particular manner, and with all sincerity, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq.

Jan. 21, 1715-16.

I know of nothing that will be so interesting to you at present, as some circumstances of the last act of that eminent comic poet, and our friend, Wycherley. He had often told me, as I doubt not he did all his acquaintance, that he would marry as soon as his life was despaired of. Accordingly, a few days before his death, he underwent the ceremony; and joined together those two sacraments which, wise men say, should be the last we receive; for if you observe, matrimony is placed after extreme unction in our Catechism, as a kind of hint of the order of time in which they are to be taken. The old man then lay down, satisfied in the conscience of having by this one act paid his just debts, obliged a wo-

man who (he was told) had merit, and shewn an heroic resentment of the ill usage of his next heir. Some hundred pounds which he had with the lady discharged those debts; a jointure of four hundred a year made her a recompence; and the nephew he left to comfort himself as well as he could, with the miserable remains of a mortgaged estate. I saw our friend twice after this was done, less peevish in his sickness than he used to be in his health; neither much afraid of dying, nor (which in him had been more likely) much ashamed of marrying. The evening before he expired, he called his young wife to the bedside, and earnestly entreated her not to deny him one request, the last he should make. Upon her assurances of consenting to it, he told her, "My dear, it is only this, that you will never marry an old man again." I cannot help remarking, that sickness, which often destroys both wit and wisdom, yet seldom has power to remove that talent which we call humour. Mr. Wycherley shewed this, even in this last compliment; though I think his request a little hard; for why should he bar her from doubling her jointure on the same easy terms?

So trivial as these circumstances are, I should not be displeased myself to know such trifles, when they concern or characterize any eminent person. The wisest and wittiest of men are seldom wiser or wittier than others in these sober moments; at least, our friend ended much in the character he had lived in; and Horace's rule for a play may as well be applied to him as a playwright:

*Servetur ad inum,
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.*

I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

Feb. 10, 1715-16.

I AM just returned from the country, whither Mr. Rowe accompanied me, and passed a week in the Forest. I need not tell you how much a man of his turn entertained me; but I must acquaint you, there is a vivacity and gaiety of disposition almost peculiar to him, which makes it impossible to part from him without that uneasiness which generally succeeds all our pleasures. I have been just taking a solitary walk by moonshine, full of

reflections on the transitory nature of all human delights; and giving my thoughts a loose in the contemplation of those satisfactions which probably we may hereafter taste in the company of separate spirits, when we shall range the walks above, and perhaps gaze on this world at as vast a distance as we now do on those worlds. The pleasures we are to enjoy in that conversation must undoubtedly be of a nobler kind, and (not unlikely) may proceed from the discoveries each shall communicate to another, of God and of Nature; for the happiness of minds can surely be nothing but knowledge.

The highest gratification we receive here from company is mirth, which, at the best, is but a fluttering unquiet motion, that beats about the breast for a few moments, and after, leaves it void and empty. Keeping good company, even the best, is but a less shameful art of losing time. What we here call Science and Study are little better: the greater number of arts to which we apply ourselves are mere groping in the dark; and even the search of our most important concerns in a future being is but a needless, anxious, and uncertain haste to be knowing, sooner than we can, what, without all this solicitude, we shall know a little later. We are but curious impertinents in the case of futurity. It is not our business to be guessing what the state of souls shall be, but to be doing what may make our own state happy: we cannot be knowing, but we can be virtuous.

If this be my notion of a great part of that high science, Divinity, you will be so civil as to imagine I lay no mighty stress upon the rest. Even of my darling poetry I really make no other use, than horses of the bells that jingle about their ears (though now and then they toss their heads as if they were proud of them), only to jog on a little more merrily.

Your observations on the narrow conceptions of mankind in the point of friendship, confirm me in what I was so fortunate as at my first knowledge of you to hope, and since so amply to experience. Let me take so much decent pride and dignity upon me as to tell you, that but for opinions like these which I discovered in your mind, I had never made the trial I have done, which has

succeeded so much to mine, and, I believe, not less to your satisfaction; for, if I know you right, your pleasure is greater in obliging me than I can feel on my part, till it falls in my power to oblige you.

Your remark, that the variety of opinions in politics or religion, is often rather a gratification than an objection, to people who have sense enough to consider the beautiful order of nature in her variations, makes me think you have not construed Joannes Secundus wrong, in the verse which precedes that which you quote: *bene nota fides*, as I take it, does no way signify the Roman Catholic religion, though Secundus was of it. I think it was a generous thought, and one that flowed from an exalted mind, that it was not improbable but God might be delighted with the various methods of worshipping him, which divided the whole world. I am pretty sure you and I should no more make good inquisitors to the modern tyrants in faith, than we could have been qualified for lictors to Procrustes, when he converted refractory members with the rack. In a word, I can only repeat to you what, I think, I have formerly said—that I as little fear God will damn a man who has charity, as I hope that any priest can save him without it. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq.

March 20, 1715-16.

I FIND that a real concern is not only a hindrance to speaking, but to writing too: the more time we give ourselves to think over one's own or a friend's unhappiness, the more unable we grow to express the grief that proceeds from it. It is as natural to delay a letter at such a season as this, as to retard a melancholy visit to a person one cannot relieve. One is ashamed in that circumstance to pretend to entertain people with trifling, insignificant affectations of sorrow on the one hand, or unseasonable and forced gaieties on the other. It is a kind of profanation of things sacred to treat so solemn a matter as a generous voluntary suffering with compliments, or heroic gallantries. Such a mind as yours has no need of being spirited up into honour, or, like a weak woman, praised

into an opinion of its own virtue. It is enough to do and suffer what we ought; and men should know, that the noble power of suffering bravely is as far above that of enterprising greatly, as an unblemished conscience and inflexible resolution are above an accidental flow of spirits, or a sudden tide of blood. If the whole religious business of mankind be included in resignation to our Maker and charity to our fellow creatures, there are now some people who give us as good an opportunity of practising the one, as themselves have given an instance of the violation of the other. Whoever is really brave, has always this comfort when he is oppressed, that he knows himself to be superior to those who injure him: for the greatest power on earth can no sooner do him that injury, but the brave man can make himself greater by forgiving it.

If it were generous to seek for alleviating consolations in a calamity of so much glory, one might say that to be ruined thus in the gross with the whole people, is but like perishing in the general conflagration, where nothing we can value is left behind us.

Methinks, the most heroic thing we are left capable of doing, is to endeavour to lighten each other's load, and (oppressed as we are) to succour such as are yet more oppressed. If there are too many who cannot be assisted but by what we cannot give, our money, there are yet others who may be relieved by our counsel, by our countenance, and even by our cheerfulness. The misfortunes of private families, the misunderstandings of people whom distresses make suspicious, the coldness of relations whom change of religion may disunite, or the necessities of half-ruined estates render unkind to each other: these at least may be softened, in some degree, by a general well-managed humanity among ourselves—if all those who have your principles or belief, had also your sense and conduct. But indeed most of them have given lamentable proofs of the contrary; and it is to be apprehended that they who want sense are only religious through weakness, and good-natured through shame. These are narrow-minded creatures, that never deal in essentials, their faith never looks beyond ceremonials, nor their charity beyond

relations. As poor as I am, I would gladly relieve any distressed, conscientious French refugee at this instant. What must my concern then be, when I perceive so many anxieties now tearing those hearts which I have desired a place in, and clouds of melancholy rising on those faces which I have long looked upon with affection! I begin already to feel both what some apprehend, and what others are yet too stupid to apprehend. I grieve with the old, for so many additional inconveniences and chagrins, more than their small remain of life seemed destined to undergo; and with the young, for so many of those gaieties and pleasures (the portion of youth) which they will by this means be deprived of. This brings into my mind one or other of those I love best, and among them the widow and fatherless, late of —. As I am certain no people living had an earlier and truer sense of others' misfortunes, or a more generous resignation as to what might be their own, so I earnestly wish, that whatever part they must bear may be rendered as supportable to them as is in the power of any friend to make it.

But I know you have prevented me in this thought, as you always will in any thing that is good or generous. I find by a letter of your lady's (which I have seen) that their ease and tranquillity is part of your care. I believe there is some fatality in it, that you should always, from time to time, be doing those particular things that make me enamoured of you.

I write this from Windsor Forest, of which I am come to take my last look. We here bid our neighbours adieu, much as those who go to be hanged do their fellow-prisoners, who are condemned to follow them a few weeks after. I parted from honest Mr. D— with tenderness; and from old sir William Trumbull, as from a venerable prophet, foretelling, with lifted hands, the miseries to come, from which he is just going to be removed himself.

Perhaps, now I have learnt so far as

Nos dulcia loquimur arca,

my next lesson may be

Nos patriam fugimus.

Let that, and all else, be as Heaven pleases! I have provided just enough to keep me a man of honour. I believe

you and I shall never be ashamed of each other. I know I wish my country well; and, if it undoes me, it shall not make me wish it otherwise.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Edward Blount, Esq. to Mr. Pope.

March 24, 1715-16.

YOUR letters give me a gleam of satisfaction, in the midst of a very dark and cloudy situation of thoughts, which it would be more than human to be exempt from at this time, when our homes must either be left, or be made too narrow for us to turn in. Poetically speaking, I should lament the loss Windsor Forest and you sustain of each other, but that, methinks, one cannot say you are parted, because you will live by and in one another, while verse is verse. This consideration hardens me in my opinion rather to congratulate you, since you have the pleasure of the prospect whenever you take it from your shelf, and at the same time the solid cash you sold it for, of which Virgil, in his exile, knew nothing in those days, and which will make every place easy to you. I, for my part, am not so happy; my *parva rura* are fastened to me, so that I cannot exchange them, as you have, for more portable means of subsistence; and yet I hope to gather enough to make the *patriam fugimus* supportable to me; it is what I am resolved on, with my *penates*. If therefore you ask me to whom you shall complain? I will exhort you to leave laziness and the elms of St. James's Park, and choose to join the other two proposals in one, safety and friendship (the least of which is a good motive for most things, as the other is for almost every thing), and go with me where war will not reach us, nor paltry constables summon us to vestries.

The future epistle you flatter me with will find me still here, and I think I may be here a month longer. Whenever I go from hence, one of the few reasons to make me regret my home will be, that I shall not have the pleasure of saying to you,

Hic tamen hanc mecum poteris requiescere noctem;

which would have rendered this place more agreeable than ever it else could be to me; for I protest, it is with the ut-

most sincerity that I assure you I am entirely. dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER XC.

Mr. Pope to Edward Blount, Esq.

Sept. 8, 1717.

I THINK your leaving England was like a good man's leaving the world, with the blessed conscience of having acted well in it; and I hope you have received your reward, in being happy where you are. I believe, in the religious country you inhabit, you will be better pleased to find I consider you in this light, than if I compared you to those Greeks and Romans, whose constancy in suffering pain, and whose resolution in pursuit of a generous end, you would rather imitate than boast of.

But I had a melancholy hint the other day, as if you were yet a martyr to the fatigue your virtue made you undergo on this side the water. I beg, if your health be restored to you, not to deny me the joy of knowing it. Your endeavours of service and good advice to the poor papists, put me in mind of Noah's preaching forty years to those folks that were to be drowned at last. At the worst, I heartily wish your ark may find an Ararat, and the wife and family (the hopes of the good patriarch) land safely after the deluge upon the shore of Totness.

If I durst mix profane with sacred history, I would cheer you with the old tale of Brutus, the wandering Trojan, who found on that very coast the happy end of his peregrinations and adventures.

I have very lately read Jeffery of Monmouth (to whom your Cornwall is not a little beholden) in the translation of a clergyman in my neighbourhood. The poor man is highly concerned to vindicate Jeffery's veracity as an historian; and told me, he was perfectly astonished we of the Roman communion could doubt of the legends of his giants, while we believe those of our saints. I am forced to make a fair composition with him; and, by crediting some of the wonders of Corinæus and Gogmagog, have brought him so far already, that he speaks respectfully of St. Christopher's carrying Christ, and the resuscitation of St. Nicholas Tolentine's chicken. Thus we proceed apace in converting each other from all manner of infidelity.

Ajax and Hector are no more to be compared to Corinæus and Arthur, than the Guelphs and Ghibellines are to the Mohocks of ever dreadful memory. This amazing writer has made me lay aside Homer for a week, and, when I take him up again, I shall be very well prepared to translate, with belief and reverence, the speech of Achilles's horse.

You will excuse all this trifling, or any thing else which prevents a sheet full of compliments; and believe there is nothing more true (even more true than any thing in Jeffery is false) than that I have a constant affection for you, and am, &c.

P. S. I know you will take part in rejoicing for the victory of prince Eugene over the Turks, in the zeal you bear to the Christian interest, though your cousin of Oxford (with whom I dined yesterday) says, there is no other difference in the Christians beating the Turks, or the Turks beating the Christians, than whether the emperor shall first declare war against Spain, or Spain declare it against the emperor.

LETTER XCI.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 17, 1717.

THE question you proposed to me is what at present I am the most unfit man in the world to answer, by my loss of one of the best of fathers.

He had lived in such a course of temperance as was enough to make the longest life agreeable to him, and in such a course of piety as sufficed to make the most sudden death so also. Sudden, indeed, it was; however, I heartily beg of God to give me such a one, provided I can lead such a life. I leave him to the mercy of God, and to the piety of a religion that extends beyond the grave; *Si qua est ea cura*, &c.

He has left me to the ticklish management of so narrow a fortune, that any one false step would be fatal. My mother is in that dispirited state of resignation, which is the effect of long life, and the loss of what is dear to us. We are really each of us in want of a friend, of such a humane turn as yourself, to make almost any thing desirable to us. I feel your absence more than ever, at the same time I can less express my re-

gards to you than ever; and shall make this, which is the most sincere letter I ever writ to you, the shortest and faintest, perhaps, of any you have received. It is enough if you reflect, that barely to remember any person when one's mind is taken up with a sensible sorrow, is a great degree of friendship. I can say no more, but that I love you, and all that are yours; and that I wish it may be very long before any of yours shall feel for you what I now feel for my father. Adieu.

LETTER XCII.

From the same to the same.

Renscomb in Gloucestershire, Oct. 3, 1721:

YOUR kind letter has overtaken me here, for I have been in and about this country ever since your departure. I am well pleased to date this from a place so well known to Mrs. Blount, where I write as if I were dictated to by her ancestors, whose faces are all upon me. I fear none so much as sir Christopher Guise, who, being in his shirt, seems as ready to combat me as her own sir John was to demolish duke Lancaster. I dare say your lady will recollect his figure. I looked upon the mansion, walls, and terraces; the plantations and slopes which nature has made to command a variety of valleys and rising woods, with a veneration mixed with a pleasure, that represented her to me in those puerile amusements, which engaged her so many years ago in this place. I fancied I saw her sober over a sampler, or gay over a jointed baby. I dare say she did one thing more, even in those early times;—"remembered her Creator in the days of her youth."

You describe so well your hermitical state of life, that none of the ancient anchorites could go beyond you for a cave in a rock, with a fine spring, or any of the accommodations that befit a solitary. Only I do not remember to have read that any of those venerable and holy personages took with them a lady, and be-gat sons and daughters. You must modestly be content to be accounted a patriarch. But were you a little younger, I should rather rank you with sir Amadis, and his fellows. If piety be so romantic, I shall turn hermit in good earnest; for, I see, one may go so far as to be poetical,

and hope to save one's soul at the same time. I really wish myself something more,—that is, a prophet; for I wish I were, as Habakkuk, to be taken by the hair of his head, and visit Daniel in his den. You are very obliging in saying I have now a whole family upon my hands; to whom to discharge the part of a friend, I assure you, I like them all so well, that I will never quit my hereditary right to them; you have made me yours, and, consequently, them mine. I still see them walking on my green at Twickenham, and gratefully remember, not only their green gowns, but the instructions they gave me how to slide down and trip up the steepest slopes of my mount.

Pray think of me sometimes, as I shall often of you; and know me for what I am, that is, your, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

From the same to the same.

Oct. 21, 1721.

YOUR very kind and obliging manner of inquiring after me, among the first concerns of life, at your resuscitation, should have been sooner answered and acknowledged. I sincerely rejoice at your recovery from an illness which gave me less pain than it did you, only from my ignorance of it. I should have else been seriously and deeply afflicted in the thought of your danger by a fever. I think it a fine and a natural thought which I lately read in a letter of Montaigne's, published by P. Coste, giving an account of the last words of an intimate friend of his: "Adieu, my friend! the pain I feel will soon be over; but I grieve for what you are to feel, which is to last you for life."

I join with your family in giving God thanks for lending us a worthy man somewhat longer. The comforts you receive from their attendance put me in mind of what old Fletcher of Saltoune said one day to me: "Alas, I have nothing to do but to die!—I am a poor individual; no creature to wish or to fear for my life or death: it is the only reason I have to repent being a single man: now I grow old, I am like a tree without a prop, and without young trees to grow round me, for company and defence."

I hope the gout will soon go after the fever, and all evil things remove far from you. But pray tell me, when will you move towards us? If you had an interval to get hither, I care not what fixes you afterwards, except the gout. Pray come, and never stir from us again. Do away your dirty acres; cast them to dirty people, such as, in the Scripture-phrase, possess the land. Shake off your earth, like the noble animal in Milton:—

The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, he springs as broke from
bonds,
And, rampant, shakes his brinded mane: the
ounce,
The libbard, and the tyger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks!

But, I believe, Milton never thought these fine verses of his should be applied to a man selling a parcel of dirty acres; though in the main, I think it may have some resemblance. For, God knows! this little space of ground nourishes, buries, and confines us, as that of Eden did those creatures, till we can shake it loose, at least in our affections and desires.

Believe, dear sir, I truly love and value you; let Mrs. Blount know that she is in the list of my *Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque*, &c. My poor mother is far from well, declining; and I am watching over her as we watch an expiring taper, that even when it looks brightest, wastes fastest. I am (as you will see from the whole air of this letter) not in the gayest nor easiest humour, but always with sincerity your, &c.

LETTER XCIV.

Mr. Pope to E. Blount, Esq.

June 27, 1723.

You may truly do me the justice to think no man is more your sincere well-wisher than myself, or more the sincere well-wisher of your whole family: with all which, I cannot deny but I have a mixture of envy to you all, for loving one another so well, and for enjoying the sweets of that life which can only be tasted by people of good-will.

They from all shades the darkness can exclude,
And from a desert banish solitude.

Torbay is a paradise: and a storm is but an amusement to such people. If you

drink tea upon a promontory that overhangs the sea, it is preferable to an assembly; and the whistling of the wind better music to contented and loving minds, than the opera to the spleenful, ambitious, diseased, distasted, and distracted souls which this world affords; nay, this world affords no other. Happy they who are banished from us! but happier they who can banish themselves, or, more properly, banish the world from them!

Alas! I live at Twickenham!

I take that period to be very sublime, and to include more than a hundred sentences that might be writ to express distraction, hurry, multiplication of nothings, and all the fatiguing perpetual business of having no business to do. You'll wonder I reckon translating the *Odyssey* as nothing. But whenever I think seriously (and of late I have met with so many occasions of thinking seriously, that I begin never to think otherwise) I cannot but think these things very idle; as idle as if a beast of burden should go on jingling his bells, without bearing any thing valuable about him, or ever serving his master.

Life's vain amusements, amidst which we
dwell; [hell!
Not weigh'd, or understood, by the grim god of

said a heathen poet; as he is translated by a Christian bishop, who has, first by his exhortations, and since by his example, taught me to think as becomes a reasonable creature; but he is gone!

I remember I promised to write to you, as soon as I should hear you were got home. You must look on this as the first day I have been myself, and pass over the mad interval unimputed to me. How punctual a correspondent I shall henceforward be able or not able to be, God knows: but he knows I shall ever be a punctual and grateful friend, and all the good wishes of such an one will ever attend you.

LETTER XCV.

From the same to the same.

Twickenham, June 2, 1725.

You shew yourself a just man and a friend in those guesses and suppositions you make at the possible reasons of my silence: every one of which is a true

one. As to forgetfulness of you, or yours, I assure you, the promiscuous conversations of the town serve only to put me in mind of better, and more quiet, to be had in a corner of the world (undisturbed, innocent, serene, and sensible) with such as you. Let no access of any distrust make you think of me differently in a cloudy day from what you do in the most sunny weather. Let the young ladies be assured I make nothing new in my gardens without wishing to see the print of their fairy steps in every part of them. I have put the last hand to my works of this kind in happily finishing the subterraneous way and grotto: I there found a spring of the clearest water, which falls in a perpetual rill, that echoes through the cavern day and night. From the river Thames, you see through my arch up a walk of the wilderness, to a kind of open temple, wholly composed of shells in the rustic manner; and from that distance, under the temple you look down through a sloping arcade of trees, and see the sails on the river passing suddenly and vanishing, as through a perspective glass. When you shut the doors of this grotto it becomes on the instant, from a luminous room, a *camera obscura*; on the walls of which all the objects of the river, hills, woods, and boats, are forming a moving picture in their visible radiations: and when you have a mind to light it up, it affords you a very different scene; it is finished with shells interspersed with pieces of looking-glass in angular forms; and in the ceiling is a star of the same material, at which, when a lamp (of an orbicular figure of thin alabaster) is hung in the middle, a thousand pointed rays glitter, and are reflected over the place. There are connected to this grotto, by a narrower passage, two porches; one towards the river, of smooth stones full of light, and open; the other toward the garden, shadowed with trees, rough with shells, flints, and iron ore. The bottom is paved with simple pebble, as is also the adjoining walk up the wilderness to the temple, in the natural taste, agreeing not ill with the little dripping murmur, and the aquatic idea of the whole place. It wants nothing to complete it but a good statue with an inscription, like that beautiful antique one which you know I am so fond of.

Hujus Nympha loci, sacri custodia fontis;

Dormio, dum blandæ sentio murmur aquæ.

*Parcæ meum, quisquis tangis cava marmora
somnum*

Rumpere; si bibas, sive lavere, tace.

Nymph of the grot, these sacred springs I keep,
And to the murmur of these waters sleep;
Ah spare my slumbers, gently tread the cave!
And drink in silence, or in silence lave!

You will think I have been very poetical in this description; but it is pretty near the truth. I wish you were here to bear testimony how little it owes to art, either the place itself, or the image I give of it. I am, &c.

LETTER XCVI.

From the same to the same.

Sept. 13, 1725.

I SHOULD be ashamed to own the receipt of a very kind letter from you, two whole months from the date of this, if I were not more ashamed to tell a lie, or to make an excuse, which is worse than a lie (for being built upon some probable circumstance, it makes use of a degree of truth to falsify with, and is a lie guarded). Your letter has been in my pocket in constant wearing, till that, and the pocket, and the suit, are worn out; by which means I have read it forty times, and I find by so doing that I have not enough considered and reflected upon many others you have obliged me with; for true friendship, as they say of good writing, will bear reviewing a thousand times, and still discover new beauties.

I have had a fever, a short one, but a violent: I am now well; so it shall take up no more of this paper.

I begin now to expect you in town to make the winter to come more tolerable to us both. The summer is a kind of heaven, when we wander in a paradisiacal scene among groves and gardens; but at this season, we are, like our poor first parents, turned out of that agreeable though solitary life, and forced to look about for more people to help to bear our labours, to get into warmer houses, and to live together in cities.

I hope you are long since perfectly restored and risen from your gout, happy in the delights of a contented family, smiling at storms, laughing at greatness, merry over a Christmas fire, and exercising all the functions of an old patriarch in charity and hospitality. I will not tell Mrs. B— what I think she

is doing; for I conclude it is her opinion, That he only ought to know it for whom it is done; and she will allow herself to be far enough advanced above a fine lady not to desire to shine before men.

Your daughters, perhaps, may have some other thoughts, which even their mother must excuse them for, because she is a mother. I will not, however, suppose those thoughts get the better of their devotions, but rather excite them and assist the warmth of them; while their prayer may be, that they may raise up and breed as irreproachable a young family as their parents have done. In a word, I fancy you all well, easy, and happy, just as I wish you: and next to that, I wish you all with me.

Next to God, is a good man: next in dignity, and next in value. *Minuisti cum paullo minus ab angelis.* If therefore I wish well to the good and the deserving, and desire they only should be my companions and correspondents, I must very soon and very much think of you. I want your company and your example. Pray make haste to town, so as not again to leave us; discharge the load of earth that lies on you, like one of the mountains under which, the poets say, the giants (the men of the earth) are whelmed: leave earth to the sons of the earth, your conversation is in heaven; which, that it may be accomplished in us all, is the prayer of him who maketh this short sermon; value (to you) three-pence. Adieu.

LETTER XCVII.

Mr. Pope to the Hon. Robert Digby.

June 2, 1717.

I HAD pleased myself sooner in writing to you, but that I have been your successor in a fit of sickness, and am not yet so much recovered, but that I have thoughts of using your physicians*. They are as grave persons as any of the faculty, and (like the ancients) carry their own medicaments about with them. But indeed the moderns are such lovers of railery that nothing is grave enough to escape them. Let them laugh, but people will still have their opinions: as they think our doctors asses to them, we will think them asses to our doctors.

* Asses.

I am glad you are so much in a better state of health as to allow me to jest about it. My concern, when I heard of your danger, was so very serious, that I almost take it ill that Dr. Evans should tell you of it, or you mention it. I tell you fairly, if you and a few more such people were to leave the world, I would not give sixpence to stay in it.

I am not so much concerned as to the point whether you are to live fat or lean; most men of wit or honesty are usually decreed to live very lean; so I am inclined to the opinion that it is decreed you shall; however, be comforted, and reflect that you will make the better busto for it.

It is something particular in you not to be satisfied with sending me your own books, but to make your acquaintance continue the frolic. Mr. Wharton forced me to take Gorboduc, which has since done me great credit with several people, as it has done Dryden and Oldham some diskindness, in shewing there is as much difference between their Gorboduc and this, as between queen Anne and king George. It is truly a scandal, that men should write with contempt of a piece which they never once saw, as those two poets did, who were ignorant even of the sex, as well as sense, of Gorboduc.

Adieu! I am going to forget you: this minute, you took up all my mind; the next, I shall think of nothing but the reconciliation with Agamemnon, and the recovery of Briseis. I shall be Achilles's humble servant these two months (with the good leave of all my friends). I have no ambition so strong at present as that noble one of sir Nathaniel Lovel, recorder of London, to furnish out a decent and plentiful execution of Greeks and Trojans. It is not to be expressed how heartily I wish the death of all Homer's heroes, one after another. The Lord preserve me in the day of battle, which is just approaching! Join in your prayers for me, and know me to be always your, &c.

LETTER XCVIII.

From the same to the same.

London, March 31, 1718.

To convince you how little pain I give myself in corresponding with men of

good nature and good understanding, you see I omit to answer your letters till a time when another man would be ashamed to own he had received them. If therefore you are ever moved on my account by that spirit, which I take to be as familiar to you as a quotidian ague, I mean the spirit of goodness, pray never stint it, in any fear of obliging me to a civility beyond my natural inclination. I dare trust you, sir, not only with my folly when I write, but with negligence when I do not; and expect equally your pardon for either.

If I knew how to entertain you through the rest of this paper, it should be spotted and diversified with conceits all over; you should be put out of breath with laughter at each sentence, and pause at each period, to look back over how much wit you have passed; but I have found by experience, that people now-a-days regard writing as little as they do preaching: the most we can hope is to be heard just with decency and patience, once a week, by folks in the country. Here in town we hum over a piece of fine writing, and we whistle at a sermon. The stage is the only place we seem alive at; there indeed we stare, and roar, and clap hands for king George and the government. As for all other virtues but this loyalty, they are an obsolete train, so ill dressed, that men, women, and children hiss them out of all good company. Humility knocks so sneakingly at the door, that every footman outraps it, and makes it give way to the free entrance of pride, prodigality, and vain glory.

My lady Scudamore, from having rusticated in your company too long, really behaves herself scandalously among us: she pretends to open her eyes for the sake of seeing the sun, and to sleep because it is night; drinks tea at nine in the morning, and is thought to have said her prayers before: talks, without any manner of shame, of good books, and has not seen Cibber's play of the Nonjuror. I rejoiced the other day to see a libel on her toilette, which gives me some hope that you have, at least, a taste of scandal left you, in defect of all other vices.

Upon the whole matter, I heartily wish you well; but as I cannot entirely desire the ruin of all the joys of this city,

so all that remains is to wish you would keep your happiness to yourselves, that the happiest here may not die with envy at a bliss which they cannot attain to. I am, &c.

LETTER XCIX.

Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope.

Coleshill, April, 1713.

I HAVE read your letter over and over with delight. By your description of the town I imagine it to lie under some great enchantment, and am very much concerned for you and all my friends in it. I am the more afraid, imagining, since you do not fly those horrible monsters, rapine, dissimulation, and luxury, that a magic circle is drawn about you, and you cannot escape. We are here in the country in quite another world, surrounded with blessings and pleasures, without any occasion of exercising our irascible faculties; indeed we cannot boast of good-breeding and the art of life, but yet we do not live unpleasantly in primitive simplicity and good humour. The fashions of the town affect us but just like a raree-show; we have a curiosity to peep at them, and nothing more. What you call pride, prodigality, and vain glory, we cannot find in pomp and splendour at this distance; it appears to us a fine glittering scene, which if we do not envy you, we think you happier than we are, in your enjoying it. Whatever you may think to persuade us of the humility of virtue, and her appearing in rags among you, we can never believe: our uninformed minds represent her so noble to us, that we necessarily annex splendour to her: and we could as soon imagine the order of things inverted, and that there is no man in the moon, as believe the contrary. I cannot forbear telling you we indeed read the Spoils of Rapine as boys do the English Rogue, and hug ourselves full as much over it; yet our roses are not without thorns. Pray give me the pleasure of hearing (when you are at leisure) how soon I may expect to see the next volume of Homer. I am, &c.

LETTER C.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby.

May 1, 1720.

You will think me very full of myself, when after long silence (which, however, to say truth, has rather been employed to contemplate of you than to forget you) I begin to talk of my own works. I find it is in the finishing a book as in concluding a session of parliament, one always thinks it will be very soon, and finds it very late. There are many unlooked-for incidents to retard the clearing any public account; and so I see it is in mine. I have plagued myself, like great ministers, with undertaking too much for one man; and, with a desire of doing more than was expected from me, have done less than I ought.

For having designed four very laborious and uncommon sort of indexes to Homer, I am forced, for want of time, to publish two only, the design of which you will own to be pretty, though far from being fully executed. I have also been obliged to leave unfinished in my desk the heads of two Essays; one on the Theology and Morality of Homer, and another on the Oratory of Homer and Virgil. So they must wait for future editions, or perish: and (one way or other, no great matter which) *dabit Deus his quoque fidem*. I think of you every day, I assure you, even without such good memorials of you as your sisters, with whom I sometimes talk of you, and find it one of the most agreeable of all subjects to them. My lord Digby must be perpetually remembered by all who ever knew him or knew his children. There needs no more than an acquaintance with your family, to make all elder sons wish they had fathers to their lives' end.

I cannot touch upon the subject of filial love, without putting you in mind of an old woman, who has a sincere, hearty, old-fashioned respect for you, and constantly blames her son for not having writ to you oftener to tell you so.

I very much wish (but what signifies my wishing!—my lady Scudamore wishes, your sisters wish) that you were with us to compare the beautiful contrast this season affords us, of the town and the country. No ideas you could

form in the winter can make you imagine what Twickenham is (and what your friend Mr. Johnson of Twickenham is) in this warmer season. Our river glitters beneath an unclouded sun, at the same time that its banks retain the verdure of showers; our gardens are offering their first nosegays; our trees, like new acquaintance brought happily together, are stretching their arms to meet each other, and growing nearer and nearer every hour: the birds are paying their thanksgiving songs for the new habitations I have made them; my building rises high enough to attract the eye and curiosity of the passenger from the river, where, upon beholding a mixture of beauty and ruin, he inquires what house is falling, or what church is rising? So little taste have our common tritons of Vitruvius; whatever delight the poetical gods of the river may take, in reflecting on their streams, by Tuscan porticos or Ionic pilasters.

But (to descend from all this pomp of style) the best account of what I am building is, that it will afford me a few pleasant rooms for such a friend as yourself, or a cool situation for an hour or two for lady Scudamore, when she will do me the honour (at this public house on the road) to drink her own eyder.

The moment I am writing this, I am surprised with the account of the death of a friend of mine; which makes all I have here been talking of, a mere jest! Building, gardens, writings, pleasures, works of whatever stuff man can raise! none of them (God knows) capable of advantaging a creature that is mortal, or of satisfying a soul that is immortal! Dear sir, I am, &c.

LETTER CI.

Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope.

May 21, 1720.

Your letter, which I had two posts ago, was very medicinal to me: and I heartily thank you for the relief it gave me. I was sick of the thoughts of my not having in all this time given you any testimony of the affection I owe you, and which I as constantly indeed feel as I think of you. This indeed was a troublesome ill to me, till, after reading your letter, I found it was a most idle, weak

imagination, to think I could so offend you. Of all the impressions you have made upon me, I never received any with greater joy than this of your abundant good-nature, which bids me be assured of some share of your affections.

I had many other pleasures from your letter; that your mother remembers me is a very sincere joy to me. I cannot but reflect how alike you are: from the time you do any one a favour, you think yourselves obliged as those that have received one. This is indeed an old-fashioned respect, hardly to be found out of your house. I have great hopes, however, to see many old-fashioned virtues revive, since you have made our age in love with Homer; I heartily wish you, who are as good a citizen as a poet, the joy of seeing a reformation from your works. I am in doubt whether I should congratulate your having finished Homer, while the two Essays you mention are not completed: but if you expect no great trouble from finishing these, I heartily rejoice with you.

I have some faint notion of the beauties of Twickenham from what I here see round me. The verdure of showers is poured upon every tree and field about us; the gardens unfold variety of colours to the eye every morning, the hedge's breath is beyond all perfume, and the songs of birds we hear as well as you; but though I hear and see all this, yet I think they would delight me more if you were here. I found the want of these at Twickenham while I was there with you, by which I guess what an increase of charms it must now have. How kind is it in you to wish me there, and how unfortunate are my circumstances that allow me not to visit you! If I see you, I must leave my father alone; and this uneasy thought would disappoint all my proposed pleasures; the same circumstance will prevent my prospect of many happy hours with you in lord Bathurst's wood, and I fear of seeing you till winter, unless lady Scudamore comes to Sherborne, in which case I shall press you to see Dorsetshire as you proposed. May you have a long enjoyment of your new favourite portico. Your, &c.

LETTER CII.

From the same to the same.

Sherborne, July 9, 1720.

THE London language and conversation is, I find, quite changed since I left it, though it is not above three or four months ago. No violent change in the natural world ever astonished a philosopher so much as this does me. I hope this will calm all party rage, and introduce more humanity than has of late obtained in conversation. All scandal will surely be laid aside, for there can be no such disease any more as spleen in this new golden age. I am pleased with the thoughts of seeing nothing but a general good humour when I come up to town; I rejoice in the universal riches I hear of, in the thought of their having this effect. They tell me you was soon content; and that you cared not for such an increase as others wished you. By this account I judge you the richest man in the South Sea, and congratulate you accordingly. I can wish you only an increase of health; for of riches and fame you have enough. Your, &c.

LETTER CIII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby.

July 20, 1720.

YOUR kind desire to know the state of my health had not been unsatisfied so long, had not that ill state been the impediment. Nor should I have seemed an unconcerned party in the joys of your family, which I heard of from lady Scudamore, whose short eschantillon of a letter (of a quarter of a page) I value as the short glimpse of a vision afforded to some devout hermit; for it includes (as those revelations do) a promise of a better life in the Elysian groves of Cirencester, whither, I could say almost in the style of a sermon, the Lord bring us all, &c. Thither may we tend, by various ways, to one blissful bower: thither may health, peace, and good-humour wait upon us as associates: thither may whole eargoes of nectar (liquor of life and longevity!), by mortals called Spaw-water, be conveyed; and there (as Milton has it) may we, like the deities,

On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh garlands
crown'd,
Quaff immortality and joy.

When I speak of garlands, I should not forget the green vestments and scarfs which your sisters promised to make for this purpose. I expect you too in green, with a hunting-horn by your side, and a green hat, the model of which you may take from Osborne's description of king James the First.

What words, what numbers, what oratory, or what poetry can suffice, to express how infinitely I esteem, value, love, and desire you all, above all the great ones of this part of the world; above all the Jews, jobbers, bubbleers, subscribers, projectors, directors, governors, treasurers, &c. &c. &c. in *sacula seculorum*!

Turn your eyes and attention from this miserable mercenary period; and turn yourself in a just contempt of these sons of Mammon, to the contemplation of books, gardens, and marriage: in which I now leave you, and return (wretch that I am!) to water-gruel and palladio. I am, &c.

LETTER CIV.

Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope.

Sherborne, July 30.

I CONGRATULATE you, dear sir, on the return of the golden age, for sure this must be such, in which money is showered down in such abundance upon us. I hope this overflowing will produce great and good fruits, and bring back the figurative moral golden age to us. I have some omens to induce me to believe it may; for when the Muses delight to be near a court, when I find you frequently with a first minister, I cannot but expect from such an intimacy an encouragement and revival of the polite arts. I know you desire to bring them into honour, above the golden image which is set up and worshipped; and, if you cannot effect it, adieu to all such hopes. You seem to intimate in yours another face of things from this inundation of wealth, as if beauty, wit, and valour would no more engage our passions in the pleasurable pursuit of them, though assisted by this increase: if so, and if monsters only, as various as those of Nile, arise from this abundance, who that has any spleen about him, will not haste to town to laugh? What will be-

come of the play-house? Who will go thither, while there is such entertainment in the streets? I hope we shall neither want good satire nor comedy; if we do, the age may well be thought barren of geniuses, for none has ever produced better subjects. Your, &c.

LETTER CV.

From the same to the same.

Coleshill, Nov. 12, 1720.

I FIND in my heart that I have a taint of the corrupt age we live in. I want the public spirit so much admired in old Rome, of sacrificing every thing that is dear to us to the commonwealth. I even feel a more intimate concern for my friends who have suffered in the South Sea, than for the public, which is said to be undone by it. But I hope the reason is, that I do not see so evidently the ruin of the public to be a consequence of it, as I do the loss of my friends. I fear there are few besides yourself that will be persuaded by old Hesiod, that *half is more than the whole*. I know not whether I do not rejoice in your sufferings; since they have shewn me your mind is principled with such a sentiment. I assure you I expect from it a performance greater still than Homer. I have an extreme joy from your communicating to me this affection of your mind:

Quid coreat dulci nutricula majus alumno!

Believe me, dear sir, no equipage could shew you to my eye in so much splendour. I would not indulge this fit of philosophy so far as to be tedious to you, else I could prosecute it with pleasure.

I long to see you, your mother, and your villa; till then I will say nothing of lord Bathurst's wood, which I saw in my return hither. Soon after Christmas I design for London, where I shall miss lady Scudamore very much, who intends to stay in the country all winter. I am angry with her, as I am like to suffer by this resolution; and would fain blame her, but cannot find a cause. The man is cursed that has a longer letter than this to write with as a bad a pen; yet I can use it with pleasure to send my services to your good mother, and to write myself your, &c.

LETTER CVI.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby.

Sept. 1, 1722.

DOCTOR Arbuthnot is going to Bath, and will stay there a fortnight or more : perhaps you would be comforted to have a sight of him, whether you need him or not. I think him as good a doctor as any man for one that is ill, and a better doctor for one that is well. He would do admirably for Mrs. Mary Digby : she needed only to follow his hints to be in eternal business and amusement of mind, and even as active as she could desire. But indeed I fear she would outwalk him ; for (as dean Swift observed to me the very first time I saw the doctor) "He is a man that can do every thing but walk." His brother, who is lately come into England, goes also to the Bath ; and is a more extraordinary man than he ; worth your going thither on purpose to know him. The spirit of philanthropy, so long dead to our world, is revived in him ; he is a philosopher all of fire ; so warmly, nay so wildly in the right, that he forces all others about him to be so too, and draws them into his own vortex. He is a star that looks as if it were all fire ; but it is all benignity, all gentle and beneficial influence. If there be other men in the world that would serve a friend, yet he is the only one, I believe, that could make even an enemy serve a friend.

As all human life is chequered and mixed with acquisitions and losses (though the latter are more certain and irremediable than the former lasting or satisfactory), so at the time I have gained the acquaintance of one worthy man, I have lost another, a very easy, humane, and gentlemanly neighbour, Mr. Stonor. It is certain, the loss of one of this character puts us naturally upon setting a greater value on the few that are left, though the degree of our esteem may be different. Nothing, says Seneca, is so melancholy a circumstance in human life, or so soon reconciles us to the thought of our own death, as the reflection and prospect of one friend after another dropping round us ! Who would stand alone, the sole remaining ruin, the last tottering column of all the fabric of friendship ; once so large, seem-

ingly so strong, and yet so suddenly sunk and buried ! I am, &c.

LETTER CVII.

From the same to the same.

I HAVE belief enough in the goodness of your whole family, to think you will all be pleased that I am arrived in safety at Twickenham ; though it is a sort of earnest that you will be troubled again with me at Sherborne or Coleshill ; for however I may like one of your places, it may be in that as in liking one of your family ; when one sees the rest, one likes them all. Pray make my services acceptable to them ; I wish them all the happiness they may want, and the continuance of all the happiness they have : and I take the latter to comprise a great deal more than the former. I must separate lady Scudamore from you, as, I fear, she will do herself before this letter reaches you ; so I wish her a good journey, and I hope one day to try if she lives as well as you do ; though I much question if she can live as quietly : I suspect the bells will be ringing at her arrival, and on her own and Miss Scudamore's birth-days, and that all the clergy in the country come to pay respects ; both the clergy and their bells expecting from her, and from the young lady, further business and further employment. Besides all this, there dwells on the one side of her the lord Conningsby, and on the other Mr. W—. Yet I shall, when the days and the years come about adventure upon all this for her sake.

I beg my lord Digby to think me a better man than to content myself with thanking him in the common way. I am, in as sincere a sense of the word, his servant, as you are his son, or he your father.

I must in my turn insist upon hearing how my last fellow-travellers got home from Clarendon, and desire Mr. Philips to remember me in his cyder, and to tell Mr. W— that I am dead and buried.

I wish the young ladies, whom I almost robbed of their good name, a better name in return (even that very name to each of them which they shall like best, for the sake of the man that bears it).
Your, &c.

LETTER CVIII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby.

1722.

YOUR making a sort of apology for your not writing, is a very genteel reproof to me. I know I was to blame, but I know I did not intend to be so; and (what is the happiest knowledge in the world) I know you will forgive me: for sure nothing is more satisfactory than to be certain of such a friend as will overlook one's failings, since every such instance is a conviction of his kindness.

If I am all my life to dwell in intentions and never to rise to actions, I have but too much need of that gentle disposition which I experience in you. But I hope better things of myself, and fully purpose to make you a visit this summer at Sherborne. I am told you are all upon removal very speedily, and that Mrs. Mary Digby talks, in a letter to lady Scudamore, of seeing my lord Bathurst's wood in her way. How much I wish to be her guide through that enchanted forest, is not to be exprest: I look upon myself as the magician appropriated to the place, without whom no mortal can penetrate into the recesses of those sacred shades. I could pass whole days in only describing to her the future, and as yet visionary beauties, that are to rise in those scenes: the palace that is to be built, the pavilions that are to glitter, the colonnades that are to adorn them: nay more, the meeting of the Thames and the Severn, which (when the noble owner has finer dreams than ordinary) are to be led into each other's embraces through secret caverns of not above twelve or fifteen miles, till they rise and celebrate their marriage in the midst of an immense amphitheatre, which is to be the admiration of posterity a hundred years hence. But till the destined time shall arrive that is to manifest these wonders, Mrs. Digby must content herself with seeing what is at present no more than the finest wood in England.

The objects that attract this part of the world, are of a quite different nature. Women of quality are all turned followers of the camp in Hyde-park this year, whither all the town resort to magnificent entertainments given by the officers, &c. The Scythian ladies that

dwelt in the waggons of war, were not more closely attached to the luggage. The matrons, like those of Sparta, attend their sons to the field, to be witnesses of their glorious deeds; and the maidens, with all their charms displayed, provoke the spirit of the soldiers: tea and coffee supply the place of Lacedemonian black broth. This camp seems crowned with perpetual victory, for every sun that rises in the thunder of cannon, sets in the music of violins. Nothing is yet wanting but the constant presence of the princess, to represent the *mater exercitus*.

At Twickenham the world goes otherwise. There are certain old people who take up all my time, and will hardly allow me to keep any other company. They were introduced here by a man of their own sort, who has made me perfectly rude to all contemporaries, and will not so much as suffer me to look upon them. The person I complain of is the bishop of Rochester. Yet he allows me (from something he has heard of your character, and that of your family, as if you were of the old sect of moralists) to write three or four sides of paper to you, and to tell you (what these sort of people never tell but with truth and religious sincerity) that I am, and ever will be, your, &c.

LETTER CIX.

From the same to the same.

THE same reason that hindered your writing, hindered mine; the pleasing expectation to see you in town. Indeed, since the willing confinement I have lain under here with my mother (whom it is natural and reasonable I should rejoice with as well as grieve), I could the better bear your absence from London, for I could hardly have seen you there; and it would not have been quite reasonable to have drawn you to a sick-room hither from the first embraces of your friends. My mother is now (I thank God) wonderfully recovered, though not so much as yet to venture out of her chamber, but enough to enjoy a few particular friends, when they have the good-nature to look upon her. I may recommend to you the room we sit in, upon one (and that a favourite) account, that it is the very warmest in the house; we and our

fires will equally smile upon your face. There is a Persian proverb that says (I think very prettily) "The conversation of a friend brightens the eyes." This I take to be a splendour still more agreeable than the fires you so delightfully describe.

That you may long enjoy your own fire-side in the metaphorical sense, that is, all those of your family who make it pleasing to sit and spend whole wintry months together (a far more rational delight, and better felt by an honest heart than all the glaring entertainments, numerous lights, and false splendours, of an assembly of empty heads, aching hearts, and false faces), this is my sincere wish to you and yours.

You say you propose much pleasure in seeing some new faces about town of my acquaintance. I guess you mean Mrs. Howard's and Mrs. Blount's. And I assure you, you ought to take as much pleasure in their hearts, if they are what they sometimes express with regard to you.

Believe me, dear sir, to you all a very faithful servant.

LETTER CX.

Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope.

Sherborne, Aug. 14, 1723.

I CANNOT return from so agreeable an entertainment as yours in the country, without acknowledging it. I thank you heartily for the new agreeable idea of life you there gave me; it will remain long with me, for it is very strongly impressed upon my imagination. I repeat the memory of it often, and shall value that faculty of the mind now more than ever, for the power it gives me of being entertained in your villa when absent from it. As you are possessed of all the pleasures of the country, and, as I think, of a right mind, what can I wish you but health to enjoy them? This I so heartily do, that I should be even glad to hear your good old mother might lose all her present pleasures in her unwearied care of you, by your better health convincing them it is unnecessary.

I am troubled, and shall be so, till I hear you have received this letter: for you gave me the greatest pleasure imaginable in yours; and I am impatient to

acknowledge it. If I anyways deserve that friendly warmth and affection with which you write, it is, that I have a heart full of love and esteem for you: so truly, that I should lose the greatest pleasure of my life if I lost your good opinion. It rejoices me very much to be reckoned by you in the class of honest men; for though I am not troubled over much about the opinion most may have of me, yet, I own, it would grieve me not to be thought well of by you and some few others. I will not doubt my own strength; yet I have this further security to maintain my integrity, that I cannot part with that, without forfeiting your esteem with it.

Perpetual disorder and ill-health have for some years so disguised me, that I sometimes fear I do not to my best friends enough appear what I really am. Sickness is a great oppressor; it does great injury to a zealous heart, stifling its warmth, and not suffering it to break out into action; but I hope I shall not make this complaint much longer. I have other hopes that please me too, though not so well grounded; these are, that you may yet make a journey westward with lord Bathurst; but of the probability of this I do not venture to reason, because I would not part with the pleasure of that belief. It grieves me to think how far I am removed from you, and from that excellent lord, whom I love! Indeed I remember him, as one that has made sickness easy to me, by bearing with my infirmities in the same manner that you have always done. I often too consider him in other lights, that make him valuable to me. With him, I know not by what connection, you never fail to come into my mind, as if you were inseparable. I have, as you guess, many philosophical reveries in the shades of sir Walter Raleigh, of which you are a great part. You generally enter there with me, and, like a good genius, applaud and strengthen all my sentiments that have honour in them. This good office, which you have often done me unknowingly, I must acknowledge now, that my own breast may not reproach me with ingratitude, and disquiet me when I could muse again in that solemn scene. I have not room now left to ask you many questions I intended about the *Odyssey*. I beg I may know how far you have carried Ulysses on his

journey, and how you have been entertained with him on the way? I desire I may hear of your health, of Mrs. Pope's, and of every thing else that belongs to you.

How thrive your garden plants? how look the trees? how spring the broecoli and the fenocchio? hard names to spell! how did the poppies bloom?—and how is the great room approved? What parties have you had of pleasure? what in the grotto? what upon the Thames? I would know how all your hours pass, all you say, and all you do; of which I should question you yet farther; but my paper is full and spares you. My brother Ned is wholly yours, and so my father desires to be, and every soul here whose name is Digby. My sister will be yours in particular. What can I add more? I am, &c.

LETTER CXI.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby.

October 10.

I WAS upon the point of taking a much greater journey than to Bermudas, even to that *undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns!*

A fever carried me on the high gallop towards it for six or seven days—but here you have me now, and that is all I shall say of it: since which time an impertinent lameness kept me at home twice as long; as if fate should say (after the other dangerous illness), “You shall neither go into the other world, nor anywhere you like in this;” else who knows but I had been at Hom-lacy?

I conspire in your sentiments, emulate your pleasures, wish for your company. You are all of one heart and one soul, as was said of the primitive Christians; it is like the kingdom of the just upon earth; not a wicked wretch to interrupt you, but a set of tried, experienced friends and fellow-comforters, who have seen evil men and evil days; and have by a superior rectitude of heart set yourselves above them, and reap your reward. Why will you ever, of your own accord, end such a millenary year in London? trans-migrate (if I may so call it) it into other creatures, in that scene of folly militant, when you may reign for ever at Hom-lacy in sense and reason triumphant? I appeal to a third lady in your family,

whom I take to be the most innocent, and the least warped by idle fashion and custom of you all; I appeal to her, if you are not every soul of you better people, better companions, and happier where you are? I desire her opinion under her hand in your next letter—I mean Miss Scudamore's*. I am confident, if she would or durst speak her sense, and employ that reason which God has given her, to infuse more thoughtfulness into you all, those arguments could not fail to put you to the blush, and keep you out of town, like people sensible of your own felicities. I am not without hopes, if she can detain a parliament-man and a lady of quality from the world one winter, that I may come upon you with such irresistible arguments another year, as may carry you all with me to Bermudas†, the seat of all earthly happiness, and the New Jerusalem of the righteous.

Do not talk of the decay of the year, the season is good where the people are so; it is the best time of the year for a painter; there is more variety of colours in the leaves, the prospects begin to open through the thinner woods, over the valleys; and through the high canopies of trees to the higher arch of heaven: the dews of the morning impearl every thorn, and scatter diamonds on the verdant mantle of the earth; the frosts are fresh and wholesome:—what would you have? The moon shines too, though not for lovers these cold nights, but for astronomers.

Have ye not reflecting telescopes‡, whereby ye may innocently magnify her spots and blemishes? Content yourselves with them, and do not come to a place where your own eyes become reflecting telescopes, and where those of all others are equally such upon their neighbours. Stay you at least (for what I have said before relates only to the ladies; do not imagine I will write about any eyes but theirs); stay, I say, from that idle, busy-looking sanhedrim, where wisdom or no wisdom is the eternal debate, not (as

* Afterwards duchess of Beaufort: at this time very young.

† About this time the rev. dean Berkley conceived his project of erecting a settlement in Bermudas, for the propagation of the Christian faith and introduction of sciences into America.

‡ These instruments were just then brought to perfection.

it lately was in Ireland) an accidental one.

If, after all, you will despise good advice, and resolve to come to London, here you will find me, doing just the things I should not, living where I should not, and as worldly, as idle; in a word, as much an anti-Bermudanist as any body. Dear sir, make the ladies know I am their servant; you know I am yours, &c.

LETTER CXII.

From the same to the same.

Aug. 12.

I HAVE been above a month strolling about in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, from garden to garden, but still returning to lord Cobham's with fresh satisfaction. I should be sorry to see my lady Scudamore's till it has had the full advantage of lord B—'s improvements; and then I will expect something like the waters of Riskins and the woods of Oakley together, which (without flattery) would be at least as good as any thing in our world; for as to the hanging gardens of Babylon, the paradise of Cyrus, and the Sharawaggis of China, I have little or no ideas of them; but, I dare say, lord B— has, because they were certainly both very great and very wild. I hope Mrs. Mary Digby is quite tired of his lordship's *extravagante bergerie*: and that she is just now sitting, or rather inclining on a bank, fatigued with over-much dancing and singing at his unwearied request and instigation. I know your love of ease so well, that you might be in danger of being too quiet to enjoy quiet, and too philosophical to be a philosopher, were it not for the ferment lord B— will put you into. One of his lordship's maxims is, that a total abstinence from intemperance or business, is no more philosophy than a total consociation of the senses is repose: one must feel enough of its contrary to have a relish of either. But, after all, let your temper work, and be as sedate and contemplative as you will, I will engage you shall be fit for any of us when you come to town in the winter. Folly will laugh you into all the customs of the company here; nothing will be able to prevent your conversation to her but indisposition, which I hope will be far from you. I

am telling the worst that can come of you; for as to vice, you are safe; but folly is many an honest man's, nay every good-humoured man's lot; nay it is the seasoning of life; and fools (in one sense) are the salt of the earth: a little is excellent, though indeed a whole mouthful is justly called the devil.

So much for your diversions next winter, and for mine. I envy you much more at present than I shall then; for if there be on earth an image of Paradise, it is in such perfect union and society as you all possess. I would have my innocent envies and wishes of your state known to you all; which is far better than making you compliments, for it is inward approbation and esteem. My lord Digby has in me a sincere servant, or would have, were there any occasion for me to manifest it.

LETTER CXIII.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 28, 1724.

It is now the season to wish you a good end of one year, and a happy beginning of another; but both these you know how to make yourself, by only continuing such a life as you have been long accustomed to lead. As for good works, they are things I dare not name, either to those that do them, or to those that do them not; the first are too modest, and the latter too selfish to bear the mention of what are become either too old-fashioned or too private to constitute any part of the vanity or reputation of the present age. However, it were to be wished people would now and then look upon good works as they do upon old wardrobes, merely in case any of them should by chance come into fashion again; as ancient fardingales revive in modern hooped petticoats (which may be properly compared to charities, as they cover a multitude of sins).

They tell me, that at Coleshill certain antiquated charities and obsolete devotions are yet subsisting; that a thing called Christian cheerfulness (not incompatible with Christmas pies and plum-broth), whereof frequent is the mention in old sermons and almanacks, is really kept alive and in practice; that feeding the hungry and giving alms to the poor, do yet make a part of good house-keep-

ing, in a latitude not more remote from London than fourscore miles; and, lastly, that prayers and roast beef actually make some people as happy as a whore and a bottle. But here in town, I assure you, men, women, and children have done with these things. Charity not only begins but ends at home. Instead of the four cardinal virtues, now reign four courtly ones, who have cunning for prudence, rapine for justice, time-serving for fortitude, and luxury for temperance. Whatever you may fancy where you live in a state of ignorance, and see nothing but quiet, religion, and good-humour, the case is just as I tell you where people understand the world, and know how to live with credit and glory.

I wish that Heaven would open the eyes of men, and make them sensible which of these is right; whether, upon a due conviction, we are to quit faction, and gaming, and high feeding, and all manner of luxury, and to take to your country way? or you to leave prayers, and almsgiving, and reading, and exercise, and come into our measures? I wish (I say) that this matter were as clear to all men as it is to your affectionate, &c.

LETTER CXIV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Digby.

April 21, 1726.

Dear sir,

I HAVE a great inclination to write to you, though I cannot by writing, any more than I could by words, express what part I bear in your sufferings. Nature and esteem in you are joined to aggravate your affliction; the latter I have in a degree equal even to yours, and a tie of friendship approaches near to the tenderness of nature; yet, God knows, no man living is less fit to comfort you, as no man is more deeply sensible than myself of the greatness of the loss. That very virtue which secures his present state from all the sorrows incident to ours, does but aggrandize our sensation of its being removed from our sight, from our affection, and from our imitation; for the friendship and society of good men does not only make us happier, but it makes us better. Their death does but complete their felicity before our own, who probably are not

yet arrived to that degree of perfection which may merit an immediate reward. That your dear brother and my dear friend was so, I take his very removal to be a proof: Providence would certainly lend virtuous men to a world that so much wants them, as long as in its justice to them it could spare them to us. May my soul be with those who have meant well, and have acted well to that meaning; and, I doubt not, if this prayer be granted, I shall be with him. Let us preserve his memory in the way he would best like, by recollecting what his behaviour would have been, in every incident of our lives to come, and doing in each just as we think he would have done; so we shall have him always before our eyes, and in our minds, and (what is more) in our lives and manners. I hope, when we shall meet him next, we shall be more of a piece with him, and consequently not to be evermore separated from him. I will add but one word that relates to what remains of yourself and me, since so valued a part of us is gone: it is to beg you to accept as yours by inheritance of the vacancy he has left in a heart which (while he could fill it with such hopes, wishes, and affections for him as suited a mortal creature) was truly and warmly his; and shall (I assure you in the sincerity of sorrow for my own loss) be faithfully at your service while I continue to love his memory, that is, while I continue to be myself.

LETTER CXV.

The Bishop of Rochester (Dr. Atterbury) to Mr. Pope.

Dec. 1716.

I RETURN your preface*, which I have read twice with pleasure. The modesty and good sense there is in it, must please every one that reads it; and since there is nothing that can offend, I see not why you should balance a moment about printing it, always provided that there is nothing said there which you may have occasion to unsay hereafter; of which you yourself are the best and the only judge. This is my sincere opinion,

* The general preface to Mr. Pope's poems, first printed in 1717, the year after the date of this letter.

which I give because you ask it; and which I would not give, though asked, but to a man I value as much as I do you; being sensible how improper it is, on many accounts, for me to interpose in things of this nature; which I never understood well, and now understand somewhat less than ever I did. But I can deny you nothing; especially since you have had the goodness often and patiently to hear what I have said against rhyme, and in behalf of blank verse; with little discretion perhaps, but, I am sure, without the least prejudice; being myself equally incapable of writing well in either of those ways, and leaning, therefore, to neither side of the question, but as the appearance of reason inclines me. Forgive me this error, if it be one; an error of above thirty years standing, and which, therefore, I shall be very loth to part with. In other matters which relate to polite writing, I shall seldom differ from you; or, if I do, shall I hope have the prudence to conceal my opinion. I am as much as I ought to be, that is, as much as any man can be, your, &c.

LETTER CXVI.

Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester.

Sept. 23, 1720.

I HOPE you have some time ago received the sulphur, and the two volumes of Mr. Gay, as instances (how small ones soever) that I wish you both health and diversion. What I now send for your perusal, I shall say nothing of; not to forestall by a single word what you promised to say upon that subject. Your lordship may criticise from Virgil to these Tales; as Solomon wrote of every thing from the cedar to the hyssop. I have some cause, since I last waited on you at Bromley, to look upon you as a prophet in that retreat, from whom oracles are to be had, were mankind wise enough to go thither to consult you: the fate of the South-Sea scheme has, much sooner than I expected, verified what you told me. Most people thought the time would come, but no man prepared for it; no man considered it would come *like a thief in the night*, exactly as it happens in the case of our death. Me-

thinks God has punished the avaricious, as he often punishes sinners, in their own way, in the very sin itself; the thirst of gain was their crime, that thirst continued, became their punishment and ruin. As for the few who have the good fortune to remain with half of what they imagined they had (among whom is your humble servant), I would have them sensible of their felicity, and convinced of the truth of old Hesiod's maxim, who, after half his estate was swallowed by the directors of those days, resolved that half to be more than the whole.

Does not the fate of these people put you in mind of two passages, one in Job, the other from the Psalmist?

Men shall groan out of the city, and hiss them out of their place.

They have dreamed out their dream, and awakening have found nothing in their hands.

Indeed the universal poverty, which is the consequence of universal avarice, and which will fall hardest upon the guiltless and industrious part of mankind, is truly lamentable. The universal deluge of the South Sea, contrary to the old deluge, has drowned all except a few unrighteous men; but it is some comfort to me that I am not one of them, even though I were to survive and rule the world by it. I am much pleased with the thought of Dr. Arbuthnot's; he says, the government and South Sea company have only locked up the money of the people, upon conviction of their lunacy (as is usual in the case of lunatics), and intend to restore them as much as may be fit for such people, as fast as they shall see them return to their senses.

The latter part of your letter does me so much honour, and shews me so much kindness, that I must both be proud and pleased in a great degree; but I assure you, my lord, much more the last than the first. For I certainly know, and feel, from my own heart, which truly respects you, that there may be a ground for your partiality one way; but I find not the least symptoms in my head of any foundation for the other. In a word, the best reason I know for my being pleased is, that you continue your favour towards me; the best I know for being proud, would be, that you might cure me of it; for I have found you to be such a physician as

does not only repair but improve. I am, with the sincerest esteem and most grateful acknowledgment, your, &c.

LETTER CXVII.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

THE Arabian Tales, and Mr. Gay's books, I received not till Monday night, together with your letter; for which I thank you. I have had a fit of the gout upon me ever since I returned hither from Westminster on Saturday night last: it has found its way into my hands as well as legs, so that I have been utterly incapable of writing. This is the first letter that I have ventured upon; which will be written, I fear, *vacillanti-bus literis*, as Tully says Tyro's letters were after his recovery from an illness. What I said to you in mine about the Monument, was intended only to quicken, not alarm you. It is not worth your while to know what I meant by it: but when I see you, you shall. I hope you may be at the Deanery towards the end of October; by which time I think of settling there for the winter. What do you think of some such short inscription as this in Latin, which may, in a few words, say all that is to be said of Dryden, and yet nothing more than he deserves?

JOHANNI DRYDENO,

CVI POESIS ANGLICANA

VIM SVAM AC VENERES DEBET;

ET SIQVA IN POSTERVM AVGBITVR

LAYDE,

EST ADHYC DEBITVRA:

HONORIS ERGO P. &c.

To shew you that I am as much in earnest in the affair as yourself, something I will send you too of this kind in English. If your design holds, of fixing Dryden's name only below, and his busto above—may not lines like these be graved just under the name?

This Sheffield rais'd, to Dryden's ashes just,
Here fix'd his name, and there his laurel'd
bust.

What else the Muse in marble might express,
Is known already; praise would make him less.

Or thus—

More needs not; where acknowledg'd merits
reign,
Praise is impertinent, and censure vain.

This you will take as a proof of my zeal at least, though it be none of my talent in poetry. When you have read it over, I will forgive you if you should not once in your life-time again think of it.

And now, sir, for your Arabian Tales. Ill as I have been almost ever since they came to hand, I have read as much of them as ever I shall read while I live. Indeed they do not please my taste: they are writ with so romantic an air, and, allowing for the difference of Eastern manners, are yet, upon any supposition that can be made, of so wild and absurd a contrivance (at least to my Northern understanding), that I have not only no pleasure, but no patience in perusing them. They are to me like the odd paintings on Indian screens, which at first glance may surprise and please a little; but when you fix your eye intently upon them, they appear so extravagant, disproportioned, and monstrous, that they give a judicious eye pain, and make him seek for relief from some other object.

They may furnish the mind with some new images; but I think the purchase is made at too great an expense: for to read those two volumes through, liking them little as I do, would be a terrible penance; and to read them with pleasure would be dangerous on the other side, because of the infection. I will never believe that you have any keen relish of them, till I find you write worse than you do; which, I dare say, I never shall. Who that *Petit de la Croise* is, the pretended author of them, I cannot tell: but observing how full they are in the descriptions of dress, furniture, &c., I cannot help thinking them the product of some woman's imagination: and believe me, I would do any thing but break with you, rather than be bound to read them over with attention.

I am sorry that I was so true a prophet in respect to the South Sea; sorry, I mean, as far as your loss is concerned; for in the general I ever was and still am of opinion, that had that project taken root and flourished, it would by degrees have overturned our constitution. Three or four hundred millions was such a weight, that whichsoever way it had leaned, must have borne down all before it. But of the dead we must speak gently; and therefore, as

Mr. Dryden says somewhere, Peace be to its manes!

Let me add one reflection, to make you easy in your ill luck. Had you got all that you have lost beyond what you ventured, consider that your superfluous gains would have sprung from the ruin of several families that now want necessities: a thought, under which a good and good-natured man, that grew rich by such means, could not, I persuade myself, be perfectly easy. Adieu, and believe me ever your, &c.

LETTER CXVIII.

From the same to the same.

March 26, 1721.

You are not yourself gladder you are well than I am; especially since I can please myself with the thought, that when you had lost your health elsewhere, you recovered it here. May these lodgings never treat you worse, nor you at any time have less reason to be fond of them!

I thank you for the sight of your verses*; and with the freedom of an honest, though perhaps injudicious friend, must tell you, that though I could like some of them, if they were any body's else but yours, yet as they are yours, and to be owned as such, I can scarce like any of them. Not but that the four first lines are good, especially the second couplet; and might, if followed by four others as good, give reputation to a writer of a less established fame; but from you I expect something of a more perfect kind, and which the oftener it is read, the more it will be admired. When you barely exceed other writers, you fall much beneath yourself: it is your misfortune now to write without a rival, and to be tempted by that means to be more careless than you would otherwise be in your composures.

Thus much I could not forbear saying, though I have a motion of consequence in the House of Lords to-day, and must prepare for it. I am even with you for your ill paper; for I write upon worse, having no other at hand. I wish you the continuance of your health most heartily; and am ever your, &c.

* Epitaph on Mr. Harcourt.

I have sent Dr. Arbuthnot the Latin MS.† which I could not find when you left me; and I am so angry at the writer for his design, and his manner of executing it, that I could hardly forbear sending him a line of Virgil along with it. The chief reasoner of that philosophic farce is a *Gallo Ligur*, as he is called—what that means in English or French, I cannot say; but all he says is in so loose, and slippery, and ticklish a way of reasoning, that I could not forbear applying the passage of Virgil to him,

*Vane Ligur, frustraque animis elate superbis!
Nequicquam patrias tentasti lubricis artes—*

To be serious, I hate to see a book gravely written, and in all the forms of argumentation, which proves nothing, and which says nothing; and endeavours only to put us into a way of distrusting our own faculties, and doubting whether the marks of truth and falsehood can in any case be distinguished from each other. Could that blessed point be made out (as it is a contradiction in terms to say it can) we should then be in the most uncomfortable and wretched state in the world; and I would in that case be glad to exchange my reason with a dog for his instinct to-morrow.

LETTER CXIX.

Lord Chancellor Harcourt to Mr. Pope.

December 6, 1722.

I CANNOT but suspect myself of being very unreasonable in begging you once more to review the inclosed. Your friendship draws this trouble on you. I may freely own to you, that my tenderness makes me exceeding hard to be satisfied with any thing which can be said on such an unhappy subject. I caused the Latin epitaph to be as often altered before I could approve of it.

When once your epitaph is set up, there can be no alteration of it, it will

† Written by Huetius bishop of Avranches. He was a mean reasoner; as may be seen by a vast collection of fanciful and extravagant conjectures, which he called a demonstration; mixed up with much reading, which his friends called learning, and delivered (by the allowance of all) in good Latin. This not being received for what he would give it, he composed a treatise on the weakness of the human understanding: a poor system of scepticism: indeed little other than an abstract from Sextus Empiricus.
—WARBURTON.

remain a perpetual monument of your friendship : and, I assure myself, you will so settle it, that it shall be worthy of you. I doubt whether the word *deny'd*, in the third line, will justly admit of that construction, which it ought to bear; *viz.* renounced, deserted, &c. *Deny'd* is capable, in my opinion, of having an ill sense put upon it, as too great uneasiness, or more good-nature than a wise man ought to have. I very well remember you told me, you could scarce mend those two lines, and therefore I can scarce expect your forgiveness for my desiring you to reconsider them.

Harcourt stands dumb, and Pope is forc'd to speak.

I cannot perfectly, at least without further discoursing you, reconcile myself to the first part of that line; and the word *forc'd* (which was my own, and, I persuade myself, for that reason only submitted to by you) seems to carry too doubtful a construction for an epitaph, which, as I apprehend, ought as easily to be understood as read. I shall acknowledge it as a very particular favour, if at your best leisure you will peruse the inclosed, and vary it, if you think it capable of being amended, and let me see you any morning next week. I am, &c.

LETTER CXX.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

Sept. 27, 1721.

I AM now confined to my bed-chamber, and to the matted room, wherein I am writing, seldom venturing to be carried down even into the parlour to dinner, unless when company, to whom I cannot excuse myself, comes, which I am not ill pleased to find is now very seldom. This is my case in the sunny part of the year:—what must I expect when

Inversum contristat Aquarius annum ?

“ If these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ” Excuse me for employing a sentence of Scripture on this occasion; I apply it very seriously. One thing relieves me a little, under the ill prospect I have of spending my time at the Deanery this winter; that I shall have the opportunity

of seeing you oftener; though, I am afraid, you will have little pleasure in seeing me there. So much for my ill state of health, which I had not touched on, had not your friendly letter been so full of it. One civil thing, that you say in it, made me think you had been reading Mr. Waller; and possessed of that image at the end of his copy, *a la malade*, had you not bestowed it on one who has no right to the least part of the character. If you have not read the verses lately, I am sure you remember them, because you forget nothing.

With such a grace you entertain,
And look with such contempt on pain, &c.

I mention them not on the account of that couplet, but one that follows: which ends with the very same rhymes and words (*appear* and *clear*) that the couplet but one after that does;—and therefore in my Waller there is a various reading of the first of these couplets; for there it runs thus:

So lightnings in a stormy air
Scorch more than when the sky is fair.

You will say that I am not very much in pain, nor very busy, when I can relish these amusements; and you will say true: for at present I am in both these respects very easy.

I had not strength enough to attend Mr. Prior to his grave, else I would have done it, to have shewed his friends that I had forgot and forgiven what he wrote on me. He is buried, as he desired, at the feet of Spenser; and I will take care to make good in every respect what I said to him when living; particularly as to the triplet he wrote for his own epitaph; which, while we were in good terms, I promised him should never appear on his tomb while I was dean of Westminster.

I am pleased to find you have so much pleasure, and (which is the foundation of it) so much health at lord Bathurst's: may both continue till I see you! May my lord have as much satisfaction in building the house in the wood, and using it when built, as you have in designing it! I cannot send a wish after him that means him more happiness; and yet, I am sure, I wish him as much as he wishes himself. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXI.

From the same to the same.

Bromley, Oct. 15, 1721.

NOTWITHSTANDING I write this on Sunday even, to acknowledge the receipt of yours this morning; yet, I foresee, it will not reach you till Wednesday morning; and before set of sun that day I hope to reach my winter quarters at the Deanery. I hope, did I say? I recal that word, for it implies desire; and, God knows, that is far from being the case: for I never part with this place but with regret, though I generally keep here what Mr. Cowley calls the worst of company in the world,—my own; and see either none beside, or what is worse than none, some of the *Arrii* or *Sebosi* of my neighbourhood: characters which Tully paints so well in one of his epistles, and complains of the too civil, but impertinent, interruption they gave him in his retirement. Since I have named those gentlemen, and the book is not far from me, I will turn to the place, and, by pointing it out to you, give you the pleasure of perusing the epistle, which is a very agreeable one, if my memory does not fail me.

I am surprised to find that my lord Bathurst and you are parted so soon: he has been sick, I know, of some late transactions; but should that sickness continue still in some measure, I prophesy it will be quite off by the beginning of November; a letter or two from his London friends, and a surfeit of solitude, will soon make him change his resolution and his quarters. I vow to you, I could live here with pleasure all the winter, and be contented with hearing no more news than the London Journal, or some such trifling paper affords me, did not the duty of my place require, absolutely require, my attendance at Westminster; where, I hope the Prophet will now and then remember he has a bed and a candlestick. In short, I long to see you, and hope you will come, if not a day, yet at least an hour sooner to town than you intended, in order to afford me that satisfaction. I am now, I thank God, as well as ever I was in my life, except that I can walk scarce at all without crutches: and I would willingly compound the matter with the gout, to be no better, could I hope to

be no worse; but that is a vain thought. I expect a new attack long before Christmas. Let me see you, therefore, while I am in a condition to relish you, before the days (and the nights) come, when I shall (and must) say, I have no pleasure in them.

I will bring your small volume of Pastorals along with me, that you may not be discouraged from lending me books, when you find me so punctual in returning them. Shakspeare shall bear it company, and be put into your hands as clear and as fair as it came out of them, though you, I think, have been dabbling here and there with the text; I have had more reverence for the writer and the printer, and left every thing standing just as I found it. However, I thank you for the pleasure you have given me in putting me upon reading him once more before I die.

I believe I shall scarce repeat that pleasure any more, having other work to do, and other things to think of, but none that will interfere with the offices of friendship; in the exchange of which with you, sir, I hope to live and die your, &c.

P. S. Addison's Works came to my hands yesterday. I cannot but think it a very odd set of incidents, that the book should be dedicated by a dead man* to a dead man†; and even that the new patron‡, to whom Tickell chose to inscribe his verses, should be dead also before they were published. Had I been in the editor's place, I should have been a little apprehensive for myself, under a thought that every one who had any hand in that work was to die before the publication of it. You see, when I am conversing with you, I know not how to give over, till the very bottom of the paper admonishes me once more to bid you adieu!

LETTER CXXII.

Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester.

Feb. 8, 1721-2.

My lord,

It is so long since I had the pleasure of an hour with your lordship, that I

* Mr. Addison.

† Mr. Craggs.

‡ Lord Warwick.

should begin to think myself no longer *Amicus omnium horarum*, but for finding myself so in my constant thoughts of you. In those I was with you many hours this very day, and had you (where I wish and hope one day to see you really) in my garden at Twit'nam. When I went last to town and was on wing for the Deanery, I heard your lordship was gone the day before to Bromley; and there you continued till after my return hither. I sincerely wish you whatever you wish yourself, and all you wish your friends or family. All I mean by this word or two, is just to tell you so, till in person I find you as I desire, that is, find you well: easy, resigned, and happy, you will make yourself, and (I believe) every body that converses with you; if I may judge of your power over other men's minds and affections, by that which you will ever have over those of your, &c.

LETTER CXXIII.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

Feb. 26, 1721-2.

PERMIT me, dear sir, to break into your retirement, and to desire of you a complete copy of those verses on Mr. Addison*; send me also your last resolution, which shall punctually be observed in relation to my giving out any copy of it; for I am again solicited by another lord, to whom I have given the same answer as formerly. No small piece of your writing has been ever sought after so much: it has pleased every man without exception, to whom it has been read. Since you now therefore know where your real strength lies, I hope you will not suffer that talent to lie unemployed. For my part I should be so glad to see you finish something of that kind, that I could be content to be a little sneered at in a line or so, for the sake of the pleasure I should have in reading the rest. I have talked my sense of this matter to you once or twice, and now I put it under my hand, that you may see it is my deliberate opinion. What weight that may have with you I cannot say; but it pleases me to have an opportunity of shewing you how well I wish you, and how true a friend I am to your fame, which I desire may grow every day, and

* An imperfect copy was got out, very much to the author's surprise, who never would give any.

in every kind of writing to which you shall please to turn your pen. Not but that I have some little interest in the proposal, as I shall be known to have been acquainted with a man that was capable of excelling in such different manners, and did such honour to his country and language; and yet was not displeased sometimes to read what was written by his humble servant.

LETTER CXXIV.

Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester.

March 14, 1721-2.

I WAS disappointed (much more than those who commonly use that phrase on such occasions) in missing you at the Deanery, where I lay solitary two nights. Indeed I truly partake in any degree of concern that affects you, and I wish every thing may succeed as you desire in your own family, and in that which, I think, you no less account your own, and is no less your family, the whole world: for I take you to be one of the true friends of it, and to your power its protector. Though the noise and daily bustle for the public be now over, I dare say, a good man is still tendering its welfare; as the sun in the winter, when seeming to retire from the world, is preparing benedictions and warmth for a better season. No man wishes your lordship more quiet, more tranquillity, than I, who know you should understand the value of it; but I do not wish you a jot less concerned or less active than you are, in all sincere, and therefore warm, desires of public good.

I beg the kindness (and it is for that chiefly I trouble you with this letter) to favour me with notice as soon as you return to London, that I may come and make you a proper visit of a day or two: for hitherto I have not been your visitor, but your lodger; and I accuse myself of it. I have now no earthly thing to oblige my being in town (a point of no small satisfaction to me), but the best reason, the seeing a friend. As long, my lord, as you will let me call you so (and I dare say you will, till I forfeit what, I think, I never shall, my veracity and integrity), I shall esteem myself fortunate, in spite of the South Sea, poetry, popery, and poverty.

I cannot tell you how sorry I am you should be troubled anew by any sort of

people. I heartily wish, *Quod superest ut tibi vivas*—that you may teach me how to do the same; who, without any real impediment to acting and living rightly, do act and live as foolishly as if I were a great man. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

March 16, 1721-2.

As a visitant, a lodger, a friend (or under what other denomination soever), you are always welcome to me; and will be more so, I hope, every day that we live; for, to tell you the truth, I like you as I like myself, best when we have both of us least business. It has been my fate to be engaged in it much and often, by the stations in which I was placed; but God, that knows my heart, knows I never loved it; and am still less in love with it than ever, as I find less temptation to act with any hope of success. If I am good for any thing, it is *in angulo cum libello*; and yet a good part of my time has been spent, and perhaps must be spent, far otherwise. For I will never, while I have health, be wanting to my duty in my post, or in any respect, how little soever I may like my employment, and how hopelessly soever I may be in the discharge of it.

In the mean time, the judicious world is pleased to think that I delight in work which I am obliged to undergo, and aim at things which I from my heart despise; let them think as they will, so I might be at liberty to act as I will, and spend my time in such a manner as is most agreeable to me. I cannot say I do so now, for I am here without any books, and if I had them could not use them to my satisfaction, while my mind is taken up in a more melancholy manner*; and how long, or how little a while, it may be so taken up, God only knows; and to his will I implicitly resign myself in every thing. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXVI.

Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester.

March 19, 1721-2.

My lord,
I AM extremely sensible of the repeated favour of your kind letters, and your thoughts of me in absence, even among

thoughts of much nearer concern to yourself on the one hand, and of much more importance to the world on the other, which cannot but engage you at this juncture. I am very certain of your good-will, and of the warmth which is in you inseparable from it.

Your remembrance of Twickenham is a fresh instance of that partiality. I hope the advance of the fine season will set you upon your legs, enough to enable you to get into my garden, where I will carry you up a mount, in a point of view to shew you the glory of my little kingdom. If you approve it, I shall be in danger to boast, like Nebuchadnezzar, of the things I have made, and to be turned to converse, not with the beasts of the field, but with the birds of the grove, which I shall take to be no great punishment: for indeed I heartily despise the ways of the world, and most of the great ones of it.

Oh, keep me innocent, make others great!

And you may judge how comfortably I am strengthened in this opinion when such as your lordship bear testimony to its vanity and emptiness. *Tinnit, inane est*, with a picture of one ringing on the globe with his finger, is the best thing I have the luck to remember in that great poet Quarles (not that I forget the devil at bowls; which I know to be your lordship's favourite cut, as well as favourite diversion).

The situation here is pleasant, and the view rural enough to humour the most retired, and agree with the most contemplative. Good air, solitary groves, and sparing diet, sufficient to make you fancy yourself (what you are in temperance, though elevated into a greater figure by your station), one of the fathers of the desert. Here you may think (to use an author's words, whom you so justly prefer to all his followers, that you will receive them kindly, though taken from his worst work†)

That in Elijah's banquet you partake,
Or sit a guest with Daniel, at his pulse.

I am sincerely free with you, as you desire I should; and approve of your not having your coach here; for if you would see lord C—, or any body else, I have another chariot, besides that little one you laughed at when you compared

* In his lady's last illness.

† The Paradise Regained.

me to Homer in a nutshell. But if you would be entirely private, nobody shall know any thing of the matter. Believe me, my lord, no man is with more perfect acquiescence, nay, with more willing acquiescence (not even any of your own sons of the church), your obedient, &c.

LETTER CXXVII.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

April 6, 1722.

UNDER all the leisure in the world, I have no leisure, no stomach to write to you: the gradual approaches of death are before my eyes. I am convinced that it must be so; and yet make a shift to flatter myself sometimes with the thought, that it may possibly be otherwise: and that very thought, though it is directly contrary to my reason, does for a few moments make me easy: however, not easy enough in good earnest to think of any thing but the melancholy object that employs them. Therefore wonder not that I do not answer your kind letter: I shall answer it too soon, I fear, by accepting your friendly invitation. When I do so, no conveniences will be wanting; for I will see nobody but you and your mother, and the servants. Visits to statesmen always were to me (and are now more than ever) insipid things: let the men that expect, that wish to thrive by them, pay them that homage; I am free. When I want them, they shall hear of me at their doors; when they want me, I shall be sure to hear of them at mine. But probably they will despise me so much, and I shall court them so little, that we shall both of us keep our distance.

When I come to you, it is in order to be with you only. A president of the council, or a star and garter, will make no more impression upon my mind, at such a time, than the hearing of a bagpipe, or the sight of a puppet-show. I have said to greatness some time ago, *Tuas tibi res habeto, egomet curabo meas*. The time is not far off when we shall all be upon the level; and I am resolved, for my part, to anticipate that time, and be upon the level with them now; for he is so that neither seeks nor wants them. Let them have more virtue and less pride; and then I will court them as much as any body; but till they

resolve to distinguish themselves some way else than by their outward trappings, I am determined (and, I think, I have a right) to be as proud as they are: though, I trust in God, my pride is neither of so odious a nature as theirs, nor of so mischievous a consequence.

I know not how I have fallen into this train of thinking: when I sat down to write, I intended only to excuse myself for not writing, and to tell you that the time drew nearer and nearer when I must dislodge: I am preparing for it; for I am at this moment building a vault in the Abbey for me and mine. It was to be in the Abbey, because of my relation to the place; but it is at the west door of it; as far from kings and Cæsars as the space would admit of.

I know not but I may step to town tomorrow to see how the work goes forward; but if I do I shall return hither in the evening. I would not have given you the trouble of this letter, but that they tell me it will cost you nothing; and that our privilege of franking (one of the most valuable we have left) is again allowed us. Your, &c.

LETTER CXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Bromley, May 25, 1722.

I HAD much ado to get hither last night, the water being so rough that the ferry-men were unwilling to venture. The first thing I saw this morning, after my eyes were open, was your letter, for the freedom and kindness of which I thank you. Let all compliments be laid aside between us for the future; and depend upon me as your faithful friend in all things within my power, as one that truly values you, and wishes you all manner of happiness. I thank you and Mrs. Pope for my kind reception; which has left a pleasing impression upon me, that will not soon be effaced.

Lord — has pressed me terribly to see him at —; and told me, in a manner betwixt kindness and resentment, that it is but a few miles beyond Twickenham.

I have but a little time left, and a great deal to do in it; and must expect that ill health will render a good share of it useless; and therefore what is likely to be left at the foot of the account,

ought by me to be cherished, and not thrown away in compliments. You know the motto of my sun-dial, *Vivite, ait, fugio*. I will, as far as I am able, follow its advice, and cut off all unnecessary avocations and amusements. There are those that intend to employ me this winter in a way I do not like; if they persist in their intentions, I must apply myself to the work they cut out for me, as well as I can. But withal, that shall not hinder me from employing myself also in a way which they do not like. The givers of trouble one day shall have their share of it another; that at last they may be induced to let me be quiet, and live to myself, with the few (the very few) friends I like: for that is the point, the single point, I now aim at; though I know the generality of the world, who are unacquainted with my intentions and views, think the very reverse of this character belongs to me. I do not know how I have rambled into this account of myself: when I sat down to write, I had no thought of making that any part of my letter.

You might have been sure, without my telling you, that my right hand is at ease, else I should not have overflowed at this rate: and yet I have not done; for there is a kind intimation in the end of yours, which I understood, because it seems to tend towards employing me in something that is agreeable to you. Pray explain yourself, and believe that you have not an acquaintance in the world that would be more in earnest on such an occasion than I; for I love you, as well as esteem you.

All the while I have been writing, pain, and a fine thrush, have been severally endeavouring to call off my attention, but both in vain; nor should I yet part with you, but that the turning over a new leaf frights me a little, and makes me resolve to break through a new temptation before it has taken too fast hold on me. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXIX.

From the same to the same.

June 15, 1722.

You have generally written first, after our parting; I will now be beforehand with you in my inquiries, How you got home, and how you do, and whether you

met with lord —, and delivered my civil reproach to him, in the manner I desired? I suppose you did not, because I have heard nothing either from you or from him, on that head; as, I suppose, I might have done, if you had found him.

I am sick of these men of quality; and the more so, the oftener I have any business to transact with them. They look upon it as one of their distinguishing privileges, not to be punctual in any business, of how great importance soever; nor to set other people at ease, with the loss of the least part of their own. This conduct of his vexes me; but to what purpose? or how can I alter it?

I long to see the original MS of Milton; but do not know how to come at it without your repeated assistance.

I hope you will not utterly forget what passed in the coach about Samson Agonistes. I shall not press you as to time; but some time or other I wish you would review and polish that piece. If upon a new perusal of it (which I desire you to make) you think as I do, that it is written in the very spirit of the ancients, it deserves your care, and is capable of being improved, with little trouble, into a perfect model and standard of tragic poetry — always allowing for its being a story taken out of the Bible, which is an objection, that, at this time of day, I know, is not to be got over. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXX.

From the same to the same.

The Tower, April 10, 1723.

Dear sir,

I THANK you for all the instances of your friendship, both before and since my misfortunes. A little time will complete them, and separate you and me for ever. But in what part of the world soever I am, I will live mindful of your sincere kindness to me; and will please myself with the thought, that I still live in your esteem and affection as much as ever I did; and that no accident of life, no distance of time or place, will alter you in that respect. It never can me; who have loved and valued you ever since I knew you, and shall not fail to do it when I am not allowed to tell you so; as the case will soon be. Give my faithful services to Dr. Arbuthnot, and thanks for what he sent me, which was

much to the purpose, if any thing can be said to be to the purpose, in a case that is already determined. Let him know my defence will be such, that neither my friends need blush for me, nor will my enemies have great occasion of triumph, though sure of the victory. I shall want his advice before I go abroad, in many things; but I question whether I shall be permitted to see him, or any body, but such as are absolutely necessary towards the dispatch of my private affairs. If so, God bless you both; and may no part of the ill fortune that attends me, ever pursue either of you! I know not but I may call upon you at my hearing, to say somewhat about my way of spending my time at the Deanery, which did not seem calculated towards managing plots and conspiracies. But of that I shall consider. You and I have spent many hours together upon much pleasanter subjects: and that I may preserve the old custom, I shall not part with you now till I have closed this letter with three lines of Milton, which you will, I know, readily, and not without some degree of concern, apply to your ever affectionate, &c.

Some nat'l tears he dropt, but wip'd them soon;

The world was all before him, where to choose
His place of rest, and Providence his guide.

LETTER CXXXI.

Mr. Pope to the Bishop of Rochester.

April 20, 1725.

It is not possible to express what I think, and what I feel; only this, that I have thought and felt for nothing but you, for some time past; and shall think of nothing so long for the time to come. The greatest comfort I had was an intention (which I would have made practicable) to have attended you in your journey, to which I had brought that person to consent, who only could have hindered me, by a tie which, though it may be more tender, I do not think more strong, than that of friendship. But I fear there will be no way left me to tell you this great truth, That I remember you, that I love you, that I am grateful to you, that I entirely esteem and value you; no way but that one, which needs no open warrant to authorize it, or secret conveyance to secure it; which no

bills can preclude, and no kings prevent; a way that can reach to any part of the world, where you may be, where the very whisper, or even the wish, of a friend must not be heard, or even suspected; by this way I dare tell my esteem and affection of you to your enemies in the gates; and you, and they, and their sons, may hear of it.

You prove yourself, my lord, to know me for the friend I am, in judging that the manner of your defence, and your reputation by it, is a point of the highest concern to me; and assuring me it shall be such, that none of your friends shall blush for you. Let me further prompt you to do yourself the best and most lasting justice: the instruments of your fame to posterity will be in your own hands. May it not be, that Providence has appointed you to some great and useful work, and calls you to it this severe way? You may more eminently and more effectually serve the public, even now, than in the stations you have so honourably filled. Think of Tully, Bacon, and Clarendon*; is it not the latter, the disgraced part of their lives, which you most envy, and which you would choose to have lived?

I am tenderly sensible of the wish you express, that no part of your misfortune may pursue me. But, God knows, I am every day less and less fond of my native country (so torn as it is by party-rage), and begin to consider a friend in exile as a friend in death; one gone before, where I am not unwilling nor unprepared to follow after; and where (however various or uncertain the roads and voyages of another world may be) I cannot but entertain a pleasing hope that we may meet again.

I faithfully assure you, that in the mean time there is no one, living or dead, of whom I shall think oftener or better than of you. I shall look upon you as in a state between both, in which you will have from me all the passions and warm wishes that can attend the living, and all the respect and tender sense of loss that we feel for the dead: and I shall ever depend upon your constant friendship, kind memory, and good offices, though I were never to see or

* Clarendon indeed wrote his best works in his banishment; but the best of Bacon's were written before his disgrace; and the best of Tully's after his return from exile.

hear the effects of them; like the trust we have in benevolent spirits, who, though we never see or hear them, we think are constantly serving us, and praying for us.

Whenever I am wishing to write to you, I shall conclude you are intentionally doing so to me; and every time that I think of you, I will believe you are thinking of me. I never shall suffer to be forgotten (nay, to be but faintly remembered), the honour, the pleasure, the pride I must ever have, in reflecting how frequently you have delighted me, how kindly you have distinguished me, how cordially you have advised me! In conversation, in study, I shall always want you, and wish for you; in my most lively, and in my most thoughtful hours, I shall equally bear about me the impressions of you; and perhaps it will not be in this life only that I shall have cause to remember and acknowledge the friendship of the bishop of Rochester. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXXII.

From the same to the same.

May, 1723.

ONCE more I write to you, as I promised; and this once I fear will be the last; the curtain will soon be drawn between my friend and me, and nothing left but to wish you a long good-night. May you enjoy a state of repose in this life, not unlike that sleep of the soul which some have believed is to succeed it, where we lie utterly forgetful of that world from which we are gone, and ripening for that to which we are to go! If you retain any memory of the past, let it only image to you what has pleased you best; sometimes present a dream of an absent friend, or bring you back an agreeable conversation. But upon the whole, I hope you will think less of the time past than of the future; as the former has been less kind to you than the latter infallibly will be. Do not envy the world your studies; they will tend to the benefit of men, against whom you can have no complaint,—I mean of all posterity; and perhaps, at your time of life, nothing else is worth your care. What is every year of a wise man's life but a censure or critic on the past? Those

whose date is the shortest live long enough to laugh at one half of it; the boy despises the infant, the man the boy, the philosopher both, and the Christian all. You may now begin to think your manhood was too much a puerility; and you will never suffer your age to be but a second infancy. The toys and baubles of your childhood are hardly now more below you than those toys of our riper and of our declining years, the drums and rattles of Ambition, and the dirt and bubbles of Avarice. - At this time, when you are cut off from a little society, and made a citizen of the world at large, you should bend your talents not to serve a party, or a few, but all mankind. Your genius should mount above that mist in which its participation and neighbourhood with earth long involved it; to shine abroad and to heaven ought to be the business and the glory of your present situation. Remember, it was at such a time that the greatest lights of antiquity dazzled and blazed the most, in their retreat, in their exile, or in their death; but why do I talk of dazzling or blazing? it was then that they did good, that they gave light, and that they became guides to mankind.

Those aims alone are worthy of spirits truly great; and such I therefore hope will be yours. Resentment indeed may remain, perhaps cannot be quite extinguished in the noblest minds; but revenge never will harbour there; higher principles than those of the first, and better principles than those of the latter, will infallibly influence men whose thoughts and whose hearts are enlarged, and cause them to prefer the whole to any part of mankind, especially to so small a part as one's single self.

Believe me, my lord, I look upon you as a spirit entered into another life*, as one just upon the edge of immortality; where the passions and affections must be much more exalted, and where you ought to despise all little views and all mean retrospects. Nothing is worth your looking back; and therefore look forward, and make (as you can) the world look after you; but take care that it be not with pity, but with esteem and admiration. I am, with the greatest sincerity,

* The bishop of Rochester went into exile the month following, and continued in it till his death, which happened at Paris on the fifteenth day of February, in the year 1732.

and passion for your fame, as well as happiness, your, &c.

LETTER CXXXIII.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

Paris, Nov. 23, 1731.

You will wonder to see me in print; but how could I avoid it? The dead and the living, my friends and my foes, at home and abroad, called upon me to say something; and the reputation of an History*, which I and all the world value, must have suffered, had I continued silent. I have printed it here, in hopes that somebody may venture to reprint it in England, notwithstanding those two frightening words at the close of it†. Whether that happens or not, it is fit you should have a sight of it, who, I know, will read it with some degree of satisfaction, as it is mine, though it should have (as it really has) nothing else to recommend it. Such as it is, *extremum hoc munus morientis habeto*; for that may well be the case, considering that within a few months I am entering into my seventieth year; after which, even the healthy and the happy cannot much depend upon life, and will not, if they are wise, much desire it. Whenever I go, you will lose a friend who loves and values you extremely, if in my circumstances I can be said to be lost to any one when dead, more than I am already whilst living. I expected to have heard from you by Mr. Morrice, and wondered a little that I did not; but he owns himself in a fault for not giving you due notice of his motions. It was not amiss that you forbore writing on a head wherein I promised more than I was able to perform. Disgraced men fancy sometimes that they preserve an influence, where, when they endeavour to exert it, they soon see their mistake. I did so, my good friend, and acknowledge it under my hand. You sounded the coast, and found out my error, it seems, before I was aware of it; but enough on this subject.

* Earl of Clarendon's.

† The bishop's name, set to his vindication of bishop Smalridge, Dr. Aldridge, and himself, from the scandalous reflections of Oldmixon, relating to the publication of lord Clarendon's History, Paris, 1721, 4to, since reprinted in England.

What are they doing in England to the honour of letters? and particularly what are you doing? *Ipsæ quid audes? Quæ circumvolitas agilis thyma?* Do you pursue the moral plan you marked out, and seemed sixteen months ago so intent upon? Am I to see it perfected ere I die; and are you to enjoy the reputation of it while you live? Or do you rather choose to leave the marks of your friendship, like the legacies of a will, to be read and enjoyed only by those who survive you? Were I as near you as I have been, I should hope to peep into the manuscript before it was finished; but alas! there is, and will ever probably be, a great deal of land and sea between us. How many books have come out of late in your parts, which you think I should be glad to peruse? Name them; the catalogue, I believe, will not cost you much trouble. They must be good ones indeed to challenge any part of my time, now I have so little of it left. I, who squandered whole days heretofore, now husband hours when the glass begins to run low, and care not to misspend them on trifles. At the end of the lottery of life, our last minutes, like tickets left in the wheel, rise in their valuation; they are not of so much worth perhaps in themselves as those which preceded, but we are apt to prize them more, and with reason. I do so, my dear friend, and yet think the most precious minutes of my life are well employed in reading what you write; but this is a satisfaction I cannot much hope for, and therefore must take myself to others less entertaining. Adieu! dear sir, and forgive me engaging with one whom you, I think, have reckoned among the heroes of the Dunciad. It was necessary for me either to accept his dirty challenge, or to have suffered in the esteem of the world by declining it.

My respects to your mother. I send one of these papers for dean Swift, if you have an opportunity, and think it worth while to convey it. My country at this distance seems to me a strange sight: I know not how it appears to you, who are in the midst of the scene, and yourself a part of it; I wish you would tell me. You may write safely to Mr. Morrice, by the honest hand that conveys this, and will return into these parts before Christmas; sketch out a rough draught of it, that I may be able to judge

whether a return to it be really eligible, or whether I should not, like the chemist in the bottle, upon hearing Don Quevedo's account of Spain, desire to be corked up again.

After all, I do and must love my country, with all its faults and blemishes; even that part of the constitution which wounded me unjustly, and itself through my side, shall ever be dear to me. My last wish shall be, like that of father Paul, *Esto perpetua!* and when I die at a distance from it, it will be in the same manner as Virgil describes the expiring Peloponnesian,

*Sternitur,
et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos.*

Do I still live in the memory of my friends, as they certainly do in mine? I have read a good many of your paper-squabbles about me, and I am glad to see such free concessions on that head, though made with no view of doing me a pleasure, but merely of loading another. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXXIV*.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 20, 1729.

YES, dear sir, I have had all you designed for me; and have read all (as I read whatever you write) with esteem and pleasure; but your last letter, full of friendship and goodness, gave me such impressions of concern and tenderness, as neither I can express, nor you, perhaps, with all the force of your imagination, fully conceive.

I am not yet master enough of myself, after the late wound I have received, to open my very heart to you; and am not content with less than that, whenever I converse with you. My thoughts are at present vainly, but pleasingly, employed on what I have lost, and can never recover. I know well I ought, for that reason, to call them off to other subjects; but hitherto I have not been able to do it. By giving them the rein a little, and suffering them to spend their force, I hope in some time to check and subdue them. *Multis fortunæ vulneribus percus-*

sus, huic uni me imparem sensi, et penè succubui. This is weakness, not wisdom; I own; and on that account fitter to be trusted to the bosom of a friend, where I may safely lodge all my infirmities. As soon as my mind is in some measure corrected and calmed, I will endeavour to follow your advice, and turn it towards something of use and moment, if I have still life enough left to do any thing that is worth reading and preserving. In the mean time I shall be pleased to hear that you proceed in what you intend, without any such melancholy interruptions as I have met with. You outdo others on all occasions; my hope, and my opinion is, that on moral subjects, and in drawing characters, you will outdo yourself. Your mind is as yet unbroken by age and ill accidents; your knowledge and judgment are at the height; use them in writing somewhat that may teach the present and future times; and, if not gain equally the applause of both, may yet raise the envy of the one, and secure the admiration of the other. Remember Virgil died at 52, and Horace at 58; and as bad as both their constitutions were, yours is yet more delicate and tender. Employ not your precious moments and great talents on little men and little things, but choose a subject every way worthy of you; and handle it, as you can, in a manner which nobody else can equal or imitate. As for me, my abilities, if I ever had any, are not what they were; and yet I will endeavour to recollect and employ them.

— *gelidis tardante senecta
Sanguis hebet, frigentque effæcto in corpore vires.*

However, I should be ungrateful to this place, if I did not own that I have gained upon the gout in the south of France much more than I did at Paris, though even there I sensibly improved. What happened to me here last summer was merely the effect of my folly, in trusting too much to a physician, who kept me six weeks on a milk diet, without purging me, contrary to all the rules of the faculty. The milk threw me at last into a fever; and that fever soon produced the gout; which finding my stomach weakened by a long disuse of meat, attacked it, and had like at once to have dispatched me. The excessive heats of this place concurred to heighten the symptoms; but in the midst of my dis-

* An imperfect copy of this Letter is printed in Pope's Works, vol. viii, p. 138. The variations are worth observing.

temper I took a sturdy resolution of retiring thirty miles into the mountains of the Cévennes; and there I soon found relief, from the coolness of the air and the verdure of the climate, though not to such a degree as not still to feel some reliques of those pains in my stomach, which till lately I had never felt. Had I staid, as I intended, there till the end of October, I believe my cure had been perfected; but the earnest desire of meeting one I dearly loved called me abruptly to Montpellier; where, after continuing two months under the cruel torture of a sad and fruitless expectation, I was forced at last to take a long journey to Toulouse; and even there I had missed the person I sought, had she not, with great spirit and courage, ventured all night up the Garonne to see me, which she above all things desired to do before she died. By that means she was brought where I was, between seven and eight in the morning, and lived twenty hours afterwards; which time was not lost on either side, but passed in such a manner as gave great satisfaction to both, and such as, on her part, every way became her circumstances and character; for she had her senses to the very last gasp, and exerted them to give me in those few hours greater marks of duty and love than she had done in all her life-time, though she had never been wanting in either. The last words she said to me were the kindest of all; a reflection on the goodness of God, which had allowed us in this manner to meet once more before we parted for ever. Not many minutes after that, she laid herself on her pillow, in a sleeping posture,

placidaque ibi demum morte quievit.

Judge you, sir, what I felt, and still feel, on this occasion; and spare me the trouble of describing it. At my age, under my infirmities, among utter strangers, how shall I find out proper reliefs and supports? I can have none but those with which reason and religion furnish me; and on those I lay hold, and make use of, as well as I can; and hope that he who laid the burthen upon me (for wise and good purposes, no doubt), will enable me to bear it, in like manner as I have borne others, with some degree of fortitude and firmness.

You see how ready I am to relapse

into an argument which I had quitted once before in this letter. I shall probably again commit the same fault, if I continue to write; and therefore I stop short here; and with all sincerity, affection, and esteem, bid you adieu, till we meet, either in this world, if God pleases, or else in another.

A friend I have with me will convey this safely to your hands; though perhaps it may be some time before it reaches you: whenever it does, it will give you a true account of the posture of mind I was in when I wrote it, and which I hope may by that time be a little altered.

LETTER CXXXV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Gay.

Binfield, Nov. 13, 1712.

You writ me a very kind letter some months ago, and told me you were then upon the point of taking a journey into Devonshire. That hindered my answering you; and I have since several times inquired of you, without any satisfaction: for so I call the knowledge of your welfare, or of any thing that concerns you. I passed two months in Sussex; and since my return have been again very ill. I went to Lintot, in hopes of hearing of you; but had no answer to that point. Our friend Mr. Cromwell too has been silent all this year; I believe he has been displeased at some or other of my freedoms, which I very innocently take, and most with those I think most my friends; but this I know nothing of, perhaps he may have opened to you: and if I know you right, you are of a temper to cement friendships, and not to divide them. I really much love Mr. Cromwell, and have a true affection for yourself, which if I had any interest in the world, or power with those who have, I should not be long without manifesting to you. I desire you will not, either out of modesty or a vicious distrust of another's value for you (those two eternal foes to merit), imagine that your letters and conversation are not always welcome to me. There is no man more entirely fond of good-nature or ingenuity than myself; and I have seen too much of those qualities in you to be any thing less than your, &c.

LETTER CXXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Aug. 23, 1713.

JUST as I received yours, I was set down to write to you, with some shame that I had so long deferred it; but I can hardly repent my neglect, when it gives me the knowledge how little you insist upon ceremony, and how much a greater share in your memory I have than I deserve. I have been near a week in London, where I am like to remain, till I become, by Mr. Jervas's help, *Elegans formarum spectator*. I begin to discover beauties that were till now imperceptible to me. Every corner of an eye, or turn of a nose or ear, the smallest degree of light or shade on a cheek, or in a dimple, have charms to distract me. I no longer look upon lord Plausible as ridiculous for admiring a lady's fine tip of an ear and pretty elbow (as the *Plain Dealer* has it), but am in some danger even from the ugly and disagreeable, since they may have their retired beauties in one trait or other about them. You may guess in how uneasy a state I am, when every day the performances of others appear more beautiful and excellent, and my own more despicable. I have thrown away three Dr. Swifts, each of which was once my vanity, two lady Bridgewaters, a dutchess of Montague, besides half a dozen earls, and one knight of the garter. I have crucified Christ over again in effigy, and made a Madonna as old as her mother St. Anne. Nay, what is yet more miraculous, I have rivalled St. Luke himself in painting; and as it is said an angel came and finished his piece, so you would swear a devil put the last hand to mine, it is so begrimed and smutted. However, I comfort myself with a Christian reflection, that I have not broken the commandment; for my pictures are not the likeness of any thing in heaven above, or in earth below, or in the water under the earth. Neither will any body adore or worship them, except the Indians should have a sight of them, who, they tell us, worship certain idols purely for their ugliness.

I am very much recreated and refreshed with the news of the advancement of the *Fan**, which, I doubt not,

will delight the eye and sense of the fair as long as that agreeable machine shall play in the hands of posterity. I am glad your Fan is mounted so soon; but I would have you varnish and glaze it at your leisure, and polish the sticks as much as you can. You may then cause it to be borne in the hands of both sexes, no less in Britain than it is in China; where it is ordinary for a mandarine to fan himself cool after a debate, and a statesman to hide his face with it when he tells a grave lie. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

September 23, 1714.

Dear Mr. Gay,

WELCOME to your native soil†! welcome to your friends! thrice welcome to me! Whether returned in glory, blest with court-interest, the love and familiarity of the great, and filled with agreeable hopes; or melancholy with dejection, contemplative of the changes of fortune, and doubtful for the future. Whether returned a triumphant whig or a desponding tory, equally all hail! equally beloved and welcome to me! If happy, I am to partake in your elevation; if unhappy, you have still a warm corner in my heart, and a retreat at Binfield in the worst of times at your service. If you are a tory, or thought so by any man, I know it can proceed from nothing but your gratitude to a few people who endeavour to serve you, and whose politics were never your concern. If you are a whig, as I rather hope, and, as I think, your principles and mine (as brother poets) had ever a bias to the side of liberty, I know you will be an honest man and an inoffensive one. Upon the whole, I know you are incapable of being so much of either party as to be good for nothing. Therefore, once more, whatever you are, or in whatever state you are, all hail!

One or two of your old friends complained they had heard nothing of you since the queen's death; I told them no

† In the beginning of this year Mr Gay went over to Hanover with the earl of Clarendon, who was sent thither by queen Anne. On her death they returned to England; and it was on this occasion that Mr. Pope met him with this friendly welcome.

* A poem of Mr. Gay's, so entitled.

man living loved Mr. Gay better than I, yet I had not once written to him in all his voyage. This I thought a convincing proof how truly one may be a friend to another without telling him so every month. But they had reasons to themselves to allege in your excuse; as men who really value one another will never want such as make their friends and themselves easy. The late universal concern in public affairs, threw us all into a hurry of spirits; even I, who am more a philosopher than to expect any thing from any reign, was borne away with the current, and full of the expectation of the successor. During your journey I knew not whither to aim a letter after you; that was a sort of shooting flying: add to this, the demand Homer had upon me to write fifty verses a day, besides learned notes, all which are at a conclusion for this year. Rejoice with me, O my friend! that my labour is over: come and make merry with me in much feasting: we will feed among the lilies (by the lilies I mean the ladies). Are not the Rosalindas of Britain as charming as the Blousalindas of the Hague? Or have the two great pastoral poets of our nation renounced love at the same time? for Philips, immortal Philips, hath deserted, yea, and in a rustic manner, kicked his Rosalinda. Dr. Parnelle and I have been inseparable ever since you went: We are now at the Bath, where (if you are not, as I heartily hope, better engaged) your coming would be the greatest pleasure to us in the world. Talk not of expenses; Homer shall support his children: I beg a line from you, directed to the post-house in Bath. Poor Parnelle is in an ill state of health.

Pardon me if I add a word of advice in the poetical way. Write something on the king, or prince, or princess. On whatsoever footing you may be with the court, this can do no harm. I shall never know where to end; and am confounded in the many things I have to say to you; though they all amount but to this, that I am entirely as ever, your, &c.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Gay.

London, Nov. 8, 1717.

I AM extremely glad to find by a letter of yours to Mr. Fortescue, that you

have received one from me; and I beg you to keep, as the greatest of curiosities, that letter of mine which you received, and I never writ.

But the truth is, that we were made here to expect you in a short time, that I was upon the ramble most part of the summer, and have concluded the season in grief for the death of my poor father.

I shall not enter into a detail of my concerns and troubles, for two reasons: because I am really afflicted and need no airs of grief, and because they are not the concerns and troubles of any but myself. But I think you (without too great a compliment) enough my friend to be pleased to know he died easily, without a groan, or the sickness of two minutes; in a word, as silently and peacefully as he lived.

Sic mihi contingat vivere, sicque mori!

I am not in the humour to say gay things, nor in the affectation of avoiding them. I can't pretend to entertain either Mr. Pulteney or you, as you have done both my lord Burlington and me, by your letter to Mr. Lowndes*. I am only sorry you have no greater quarrel to Mr. Lowndes, and wished you paid some hundreds a year to the land-tax. That gentleman is lately become an inoffensive person to me too; so that we may join heartily in our addresses to him, and (like true patriots) rejoice in all that good done to the nation and government, to which we contribute nothing ourselves.

I should not forget to acknowledge your letter sent from Aix; you told me then that writing was not good with the waters; and I find since, you are of my opinion, that it is as bad without the waters. But, I fancy, it is not writing, but thinking, that is so bad with the waters; and then you might write without any manner of prejudice, if you write like our brother-poets of these days.

The Duchess, lord Warwick, lord Stanhope, Mrs. Bellenden, Mrs. Lepell, and I cannot tell who else, had your letters. Dr. Arbuthnot and I expect to be treated like friends. I would send my services to Mr. Pulteney, but that he is out of favour at court; and make some com-

* A Poem entitled, *To my ingenious and worthy friend, W. Lowndes, Esq. Author of that celebrated treatise in Folio, called the LAND-TAX BILL.*

pliment to Mrs. Pulteney, if she were not a whig. My lord Burlington tells me she has as much outshined all the French ladies, as she did the English before; I am sorry for it, because it will be detrimental to our holy religion, if heretical women should eclipse those nuns and orthodox beauties, in whose eyes alone lie all the hopes we can have, of gaining such fine gentlemen as you to our church. Yours, &c.

I wish you joy of the birth of the young prince, because he is the only prince we have from whom you have had no expectations and no disappointments.

LETTER CXXXIX.

Mr. Gay to Mr. F——.

Stanton Harcourt, Aug. 9, 1718.

THE only news that you can expect to have from me here, is news from heaven, for I am quite out of the world; and there is scarce any thing can reach me, except the noise of thunder, which undoubtedly you have heard too. We have read in old authors of high towers levelled by it to the ground, while the humbler valleys have escaped: the only thing that is proof against it is the laurel, which, however, I take to be no great security to the brains of modern authors. But to let you see that the contrary to this often happens, I must acquaint you, that the highest and most extravagant heap of towers in the universe, which is in this neighbourhood, stand still undamaged, while a cock of barley in our next field has been consumed to ashes. Would to God that this heap of barley had been all that had perished! for, unhappily, beneath this little shelter sat two much more constant lovers than ever were found in romance under the shade of a beech-tree. John Hewet was a well-set man, of about five-and-twenty; Sarah Drew might be rather called comely than beautiful, and was about the same age. They had passed through the various labours of the year together, with the greatest satisfaction; if she milked, it was his morning and evening care to bring the cows to her hand; it was but last fair that he bought her a present of green silk for her straw hat; and the posie on her silver ring was of his choosing. Their love was the talk of the whole neighbourhood; for scandal never

affirmed that they had any other views than the lawful possession of each other in marriage. It was that very morning that he had obtained the consent of her parents; and it was but till the next week that they were to wait to be happy. Perhaps in the intervals of their work they were now talking of the wedding-clothes; and John was suiting several sorts of poppies and field flowers to her complexion, to choose her a knot for the wedding-day. While they were thus busied (it was on the last of July, between two and three in the afternoon) the clouds grew black, and such a storm of thunder and lightning ensued, that all the labourers made the best of their way to what shelter the trees and hedges afforded. Sarah was frightened, and fell down in a swoon on a heap of barley. John, who never separated from her, sat down by her side, having raked together two or three heaps, the better to secure her from the storm. Immediately there was heard so loud a crack, as if heaven had split asunder: every one was now solicitous for the safety of his neighbour, and called to one another throughout the field: no answer being returned to those who called to our lovers, they stept to the place where they lay; they perceived the barley all in a smoke, and then spied this faithful pair; John with one arm about Sarah's neck, and the other held over her, as to skreen her from the lightning. They were struck dead, and stiffened in this tender posture. Sarah's left eye-brow was singed, and there appeared a black spot on her breast: her lover was all over black, but not the least signs of life were found in either. Attended by their melancholy companions, they were conveyed to the town, and the next day were interred in Stanton-Harcourt churchyard. My lord Harcourt, at Mr. Pope's and my request, has caused a stone to be placed over them, upon condition that we furnished the epitaph, which is as follows:—

When Eastern lovers feed the fun'ral fire,
On the same pile the faithful pair expire:
Here pitying Heav'n that virtue mutual found,
And blasted both, that it might neither wound.
Hearts so sincere th' Almighty saw well pleas'd,
Sent his own lightning, and the victims seiz'd.

But my lord is apprehensive the country people will not understand this; and Mr. Pope says he'll make one with something of Scripture in it, and with as little of

poetry as Hopkins and Sternhold*.
Your, &c.

LETTER CXL.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Gay

July 13, 1722.

I WAS very much pleased, not to say obliged, by your kind letter, which sufficiently warmed my heart to have answered it sooner, had I not been deceived (a way one often is deceived) by hearkening to women; who told me that both lady Burlington and yourself were immediately to return from Tunbridge; and that my lord was gone to bring you back. The world furnishes us with too many examples of what you complain of in yours; and, I assure you, none of them touch and grieve me so much as what relates to you. I think your sentiments upon it are the very same I should entertain: I wish those we call great men had the same notions, but they are really the most little creatures in the world; and the most interested, in all but one point; which is, that they want judgment to know their greatest interest, to encourage and choose honest men for their friends.

I have not once seen the person you complain of, whom I have late thought to be, as the apostle admonisheth, one flesh with his wife.

Pray make my sincere compliments to lord Burlington, whom I have long known to have a stronger bent of mind to be all that is good and honourable, than almost any one of his rank.

I have not forgot yours to lord Bolingbroke, though I hope to have speedily a fuller opportunity, he returning for Flanders and France next month.

* The epitaph was this:

Near this place lie the bodies of
JOHN HEWET and SARAH DREW,
an industrious young man
and virtuous maiden of this parish;
who, being at harvest-work,
(with several others)
were in one instant killed by lightning,
the last day of July, 1718.

Think not by rigorous judgment seiz'd,
A pair so faithful could expire;
Victims so pure Heav'n saw well pleas'd,
And snatch'd them in celestial fire.

Live well, and fear no sudden fate;
When God calls virtue to the grave,
Alike 'tis justice soon or late,
Mercy alike to kill or save.

Virtue unmov'd can bear the call,
And face the flash that melts the ball.

Mrs. Howard has writ you something or other in a letter, which, she says, she repents. She has as much good-nature as if she had never seen any ill-nature, and had been bred among lambs and turtle doves, instead of princes and court ladies.

By the end of this week Mr. Fortescue will pass a few days with me: we shall remember you in our potations, and wish you a fisher with us, on my grass plat. In the mean time we wish you success as a fisher of women at the Wells, a rejoicer of the comfortless and widow, and a playfellow of the maiden. I am your, &c.

LETTER CXLI.

From the same to the same.

I FAITHFULLY assure you, in the midst of that melancholy with which I have been so long encompassed, in an hourly expectation almost of my mother's death, there was no circumstance that rendered it more insupportable to me, than that I could not leave her to see you. Your own present escape from so imminent danger, I pray God may prove less precarious than my poor mother's can be; whose life at best can be but a short reprieve, or a longer dying. But I fear, even that is more than God will please to grant me; for these two days past, her most dangerous symptoms are returned upon her; and, unless there be a sudden change, I must in a few days, if not in a few hours, be deprived of her. In the afflicting prospect before me, I know nothing that can so much alleviate it as the view now given me (Heaven grant it may increase!) of your recovery. In the sincerity of my heart, I am excessively concerned not to be able to pay you, dear Gay, any part of the debt, I very gratefully remember, I owe you on a like sad occasion, when you were here comforting me in her last great illness. May your health augment as fast as I fear hers must decline! I believe that would be very fast. May the life that is added to you be past in good fortune and tranquillity, rather of your own giving to yourself than from any expectation or trust in others! May you and I live together, without wishing more felicity or acquisitions than friendship can give and receive without obligations

to greatness. God keep you, and three or four more of those I have known as long, that I may have something worth the surviving my mother. Adieu, dear Gay, and believe me (while you live, and while I live) your, &c.

As I told you in my last letter, I repeat it in this—do not think of writing to me. The Doctor, Mrs. Howard, and Mrs. Blount, give me daily accounts of you.

LETTER CXLII.

From the same to the same.

I AM glad to hear of the progress of your recovery, and the oftener I hear it the better, when it becomes easy to you to give it me. I so well remember the consolation you were to me in my mother's former illness, that it doubles my concern at this time not to be able to be with you, or you able to be with me. Had I lost her, I would have been nowhere else but with you during your confinement. I have now past five weeks without once going from home, and without any company but for three or four of the days. Friends rarely stretch their kindness so far as ten miles. My lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Bethel have not forgotten to visit me: the rest (except Mrs. Blount once) were contented to send messages. I never passed so melancholy a time; and now Mr. Congreve's death touches me nearly. It was twenty years and more that I have known him: every year carries away something dear with it, till we outlive all tendernesses, and become wretched individuals again as we began. Adieu! This is my birthday; and this is my reflection upon it:—

With added days, if life give nothing new,
But, like a sieve, let ev'ry pleasure through;
Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,
And all we gain, some sad reflection more!
Is this a birthday?—'Tis, alas! too clear,
'Tis but the fun'ral of the former year!

Your, &c.

LETTER CXLIII.

From the same to the same.

Oct. 6, 1727.

Dear sir,

I HAVE many years ago magnified, in my own mind, and repeated to you, a ninth beatitude, added to the eight in

the Scripture: "Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed." I could find in my heart to congratulate you on this happy dismission from all court dependence: I dare say I shall find you the better and the honester man for it, many years hence: very probably the healthfuller and the cheerfuller into the bargain. You are happily rid of many cursed ceremonies, as well as of many ill and vicious habits, of which few or no men escape the infection, who are hackneyed and trammelled in the ways of a court. Princes, indeed, and peers (the lackeys of princes), and ladies (the fools of peers), will smile on you the less; but men of worth and real friends will look on you the better. There is a thing, the only thing which kings and queens cannot give you (for they have it not to give)—liberty, and which is worth all they have; which, as yet, I thank God, Englishmen need not ask from their hands. You will enjoy that and your own integrity, and the satisfactory consciousness of having *not* merited such graces from courts as are bestowed only on the mean, servile, flattering, interested, and underserving. The only steps to the favour of the great are such complacencies, such compliances, such distant decourments, as delude them in their vanities, to engage them in their passions. He is the greatest favourite who is the falsest; and when a man, by such vile gradations, arrives at the height of grandeur and power, he is then at best but in a circumstance to be hated, and in a condition to be hanged, for serving their ends: so many a minister has found it!

I believe you did not want advice, in the letter you sent by my lord Grantham: I presume you writ it not without: and you could not have better, if I guess right at the person who agreed to your doing it, in respect to any decency you ought to observe; for I take that person to be a perfect judge of decencies and forms. I am not without fears even on that person's account: I think it a bad omen: but what have I to do with court omens? Dear Gay, adieu. I can only add a plain, uncourtly speech: while you are nobody's servant, you may be any one's friend, and as such I embrace you, in all conditions of life. While I have a shilling you shall have sixpence;

nay, eight pence, if I can contrive to live upon a groat. I am, faithfully, your, &c.

LETTER CXLIV.

Mr. Pope to Mrs. B.

Cirencester.

It is a true saying, "That misfortunes alone prove one's friendships;" they shew us not only that of other people for us, but our own for them. We hardly know ourselves any otherwise. I feel my being forced to this Bath journey as a misfortune; and to follow my own welfare preferably to those I love, is indeed a new thing to me: my health has not usually got the better of my tendernesses and affections. I set out with a heavy heart, wishing I had done this thing the last season; for every day I defer it, the more I am in danger of that accident which I dread the most, my mother's death (especially should it happen while I am away). And another reflection pains me, that I have never, since I knew you, been so long separated from you as I now must be. Methinks we live to be more and more strangers; and every year teaches you to live without me: this absence may, I fear, make my return less welcome and less wanted to you than once it seemed, even after but a fortnight. Time ought not in reason to diminish friendship, when it confirms the truth of it by experience.

The journey has a good deal disordered me, notwithstanding my resting place at lord Bathurst's. My lord is too much for me; he walks, and is in spirits all day long. I rejoice to see him so. It is a right distinction, that I am happier in seeing my friends so many degrees above me, be it in fortune, health, or pleasures, than I can be in sharing either with them; for in these sort of enjoyments I cannot keep pace with them, any more than I can walk with a stronger man. I wonder to find I am a companion for none but old men, and forget that I am not a young fellow myself. The worst is, that reading and writing, which I have still the greatest relish for, are growing painful to my eyes. But if I can preserve the good opinion of one or two friends to such a degree as to have their indulgence to my weaknesses, I will not complain of life: and if I could live to

see you consult your ease and quiet, by becoming independent on those who will never help you to either, I doubt not of finding the latter part of my life pleasanter than the former, or present. My uneasinesses of body I can bear; my chief uneasiness of mind is in your regard. You have a temper that would make you easy and beloved (which is all the happiness one needs to wish in this world), and content with moderate things. All your point is not to lose that temper by sacrificing yourself to others, out of a mistaken tenderness, which hurts you, and profits not them. And this you must do soon, or it will be too late: habit will make it as hard for you to live independent, as for L—— to live out of a court.

You must excuse me for observing what I think any defect in you: you grow too indolent, and give things up too easily; which would be otherwise, when you found and felt yourself your own: spirits would come in, as ill usage went out. While you live under a kind of perpetual dejection and oppression, nothing at all belongs to you, not your own humour, nor your own sense.

You cannot conceive how much you would find resolution rise, and cheerfulness grow upon you, if you would once try to live independent for two or three months. I never think tenderly of you but this comes across me: and therefore excuse my repeating it; for whenever I do not, I dissemble half that I think of you. Adieu. Pray write, and be particular about your health.

LETTER CXLV.

Mr. Pope to Hugh Bethel, Esq.

July 12, 1725.

I ASSURE you unfeignedly, any memorial of your good-nature and friendliness is most welcome to me, who know those tenders of affection from you are not like the common traffic of compliments and professions which most people only give that they may receive; and is at best a commerce of vanity, if not of falsehood. I am happy in not immediately wanting the sort of good offices you offer: but if I did want them, I should not think myself unhappy in receiving them at your hands: this really is some compliment, for I would rather

most men did me a small injury than a kindness. I know your humanity; and allow me to say, I love and value you for it: it is a much better ground of love and value than all the qualities I see the world so fond of: they generally admire in the wrong place, and generally most admire the things they do not comprehend, or the things they can never be the better for. Very few can receive pleasure or advantage from wit which they seldom taste, or learning which they seldom understand; much less from the quality, high birth, or shining circumstances of those to whom they profess esteem, and who will always remember how much they are their inferiors. But humanity and sociable virtues are what every creature wants every day, and still wants more the longer he lives, and most the very moment he dies. It is ill travelling either in a ditch or on a terrace: we should walk in the common way, where others are continually passing on the same level, to make the journey of life supportable by bearing one another company in the same circumstances. Let me know how I may convey over the *Odysseys* for your amusement in your journey, that you may compare your own travels with those of *Ulysses*: I am sure yours are undertaken upon a more disinterested, and therefore a more heroic motive. Far be the omen from you, of returning, as he did, alone, without saving a friend.

There is lately printed a book* wherein all human virtue is reduced to one test, that of truth, and branched out in every instance of our duty to God and man. If you have not seen it, you must, and I will send it together with the *Odyssey*. The very women read it, and pretend to be charmed with that beauty which they generally think the least of. They make as much ado about truth since this book appeared, as they did about health when *Dr. Cheney's* came out; and will doubtless be as constant in the pursuit of one as of the other. Adieu.

* *Mr. Wollaston's* excellent book of the Religion of Nature delineated. The queen was fond of it; and that made the reading, and the talking of it, fashionable.

LETTER CXLVI.

From the same to the same.

Aug. 9, 1726.

I NEVER am unmindful of those I think so well of as yourself; their number is not so great as to confound one's memory. Nor ought you to decline writing to me, upon an imagination that I am much employed by other people. For though my house is like the house of a patriarch of old, standing by the highway side and receiving all travellers, nevertheless, I seldom go to bed without the reflection, that one's chief business is to be really at home: and I agree with you in your opinion of company, amusements, and all the silly things which mankind would fain make pleasures of, when in truth they are labour and sorrow.

I condole with you on the death of your relation, the E. of C., as on the fate of a mortal man: esteem I never had for him, but concern and humanity I had: the latter was due to the infirmity of his last period, though the former was not due to the triumphant and vain part of his course. He certainly knew himself best at last, and knew best the little value of others, whose neglect of him, whom they so grossly followed and flattered in the former scene of his life, shewed him as worthless as they could imagine him to be, were he all that his worst enemies believed of him: for my own part, I am sorry for his death, and wish he had lived long enough to see so much of the faithlessness of the world, as to have been above the mad ambition of governing such wretches as he must have found it to be composed of.

Though you could have no great value for this great man, yet acquaintance itself, the custom of seeing the face, or entering under the roof, of one that walks along with us in the common way of the world, is enough to create a wish at least for his being above ground, and a degree of uneasiness at his removal. It is the loss of an object familiar to us: I should hardly care to have an old post pulled up that I remembered ever since I was a child. And add to this the reflection (in the case of such as were not the best of their species), what their condition in another life may be, it is yet a more important motive for our concern and compassion. To say the truth, either

in the case of death or life, almost every body and every thing is a cause or object for humanity; even prosperity itself, and health itself; so many weak, pitiful incidents attend on them.

I am sorry any relation of yours is ill, whoever it be, for you do not name the person. But I conclude it is one of those to whose houses you tell me you are going, for I know no invitation with you is so strong as when any one is in distress, or in want of your assistance: the strongest proof in the world of this was your attendance on the late earl.

I have been very melancholy for the loss of Mr. Blount. Whoever has any portion of good-nature will suffer on these occasions; but a good mind rewards its own sufferings. I hope to trouble you as little as possible, if it be my fate to go before you. I am of old Ennius's mind, *Nemo me decoret lachrymis*, I am but a lodger here: this is not an abiding city; I am only to stay out my lease: for what has perpetuity and mortal man to do with each other? but I could be glad you would take up with an inn at Twickenham, as long as I am host of it: if not, I would take up freely with any inn of yours. Adieu, dear sir: let us while away this life; and (if we can) meet in another.

LETTER CXLVII.

Mr. Pope to Hugh Bethel, Esq.

June 17, 1728.

AFTER the publishing of my boyish letters to Mr. Cromwell, you will not wonder if I should forswear writing a letter again while I live; since I do not correspond with a friend upon the terms of any other free subject of this kingdom. But to you I can never be silent, nor reserved; and, I am sure, my opinion of your heart is such, that I could open mine to you in no manner which I could fear the whole world should know. I could publish my own heart too, I will venture to say, for any mischief or malice there is in it: but a little too much folly or weakness might (I fear) appear to make such a spectacle either instructive or agreeable to others.

I am reduced to beg of all my acquaintance to secure me from the like usage for the future, by returning me any letters of mine which they may have

preserved; that I may not be hurt, after my death, by that which was the happiness of my life, their partiality and affection to me.

I have nothing of myself to tell you, only that I have had but indifferent health. I have not made a visit to London: curiosity and the love of dissipation die apace in me. I am not glad nor sorry for it: but am very sorry for those who have nothing else to live on.

I have read much, but writ no more. I have small hopes of doing good, no vanity in writing, and little ambition to please a world not very candid or deserving. If I can preserve the good opinion of a few friends, it is all I can expect, considering how little good I can do even to them to merit it. Few people have your candour, or are so willing to think well of another from whom they receive no benefit, and gratify no vanity. But of all the soft sensations, the greatest pleasure is to give and receive mutual trust. It is my belief and firm hope, that men are made happy in this life, as well as in the other. My confidence in your good opinion, and dependence upon that of one or two more, is the chief cordial drop I taste, amidst the insipid, the disagreeable, the cloying, or the dead-sweet, which are the common draughts of life. Some pleasures are too pert, as well as others too flat, to be relished long: and vivacity in some cases is worse than dulness. Therefore, indeed for many years, I have not chosen my companions for any of the qualities in fashion, but almost entirely for that which is the most out of fashion—sincerity. Before I am aware of it, I am making your panegyric, and perhaps my own too; for next to possessing the best qualities, is the esteeming and distinguishing those who possess them. I truly love and value you; and so I stop short.

LETTER CXLVIII.

The Earl of Peterborow to Mr. Pope.

WHENEVER you apply as a good Papist to your female mediatrix, you are sure of success; but there is not a full assurance of your entire submission to mother-church, and that abates a little of your authority. However, if you will accept of country letters, she will corre-

spond from the hay-cock, and I will write to you upon the side of my wheelbarrow: surely such letters might escape examination.

Your idea of the golden age is, that every shepherd might pipe where he pleased. As I have lived longer I am more moderate in my wishes, and would be content with the liberty of not piping where I am not pleased.

Oh how I wish, to myself and my friends, a freedom, which fate seldom allows, and which we often refuse ourselves! Why is our shepherdess* in voluntary slavery? Why must our dean submit to the colour of his coat, and live absent from us? And why are you confined to what you cannot relieve?

I seldom venture to give accounts of my journeys beforehand, because I take resolutions of going to London, and keep them no better than quarrelling lovers do theirs. But the devil will drive me thither about the middle of next month, and I will call upon you, to be sprinkled with holy water before I enter the place of corruption. Your, &c.

LETTER CXLIX.

Dr. Swift to the Earl of Peterborow.

My lord,

I NEVER knew or heard of any person, so volatile, and so fixed as your lordship: you, while your imagination is carrying you through every corner of the world where you have or have not been, can at the same time remember to do offices of favour and kindness to the meanest of your friends; and in all the scenes you have passed, have not been able to attain that one quality peculiar to a great man, of forgetting every thing but injuries. Of this I am a living witness against you; for being the most insignificant of all your old humble servants, you were so cruel as never to give me time to ask a favour, but prevented me, in doing whatever you thought I desired, or could be for my credit or advantage.

I have often admired at the capriciousness of fortune in regard to your lordship. She hath forced courts to act against their oldest and most constant maxims; to make you a general because you had courage and conduct; an am-

bassador, because you had wisdom and knowledge in the interests of Europe, and an admiral, on account of your skill in maritime affairs; whereas, according to the usual method of court-proceedings, I should have been at the head of the army, and you of the church, or rather a curate under the dean of St. Patrick.

The archbishop of Dublin laments that he did not see your lordship till he was just upon the point of leaving the Bath; I pray God you may have found success in that journey, else I shall continue to think there is a fatality in all your lordship's undertakings, which only terminate in your own honour and the good of the public, without the least advantage to your health or fortune.

I remember lord Oxford's ministry used to tell me, that not knowing where to write to you, they were forced to write at you. It is so with me, for you are in one thing an evangelical man, that you know not where to lay your head; and, I think, you have no house. Pray, my lord, write to me, that I may have the pleasure, in this scoundrel country, of going about, and shewing my depending parsons a letter from the earl of Peterborow. I am, &c.

LETTER CL.

Mr. Pope to Mr. C——.

Sept. 2, 1732.

I ASSURE you I am glad of your letter; and have long wanted nothing but the permission you now give me, to be plain and unreserved upon this head. I wrote to you concerning it long since: but a friend of yours and mine was of opinion, it was taking too much upon me, and more than I could be entitled to by the mere merit of a long acquaintance, and good-will. I have not a thing in my heart relating to any friend, which I would not, in my own nature, declare to all mankind. The truth is what you guess; I could not esteem your conduct to an object of misery so near you as Mrs. —; and have often hinted it to yourself: the truth is, I cannot yet esteem it for any reason I am able to see. But this I promise, I acquit you as far as your own mind acquits you. I have now no further cause of complaint, for the

* Mrs. H.

unhappy lady gives me now no further pain : she is no longer an object either of yours or my compassion ; the hardships done her are lodged in the hands of God ; nor has any man more to do in them, except the persons concerned in occasioning them.

As for the interruption of our correspondence, I am sorry you seem to put the test of my friendship upon that, because it is what I am disqualified from toward my other acquaintance, with whom I cannot hold any frequent commerce. I will name you the obstacles which I cannot surmount : want of health, want of time, want of good eyes ; and one yet stronger than them all, I write not upon the terms of other men. For however glad I might be of expressing my respect, opening my mind, or venting my concerns, to my private friends, I hardly dare while there are Curls in the world. If you please to reflect either on the impertinence of weak admirers, the malice of low enemies, the avarice of mercenary booksellers, or the silly curiosity of people in general, you will confess I have small reason to indulge correspondences ; in which too I want materials, as I live altogether out of town, and have abstracted my mind (I hope) to better things than common news. I wish my friends would send me back those forfeitures of my discretion ; commit to my justice what I trusted only to their indulgence, and return me at the year's end those trifling letters, which can be to them but a day's amusement, but to me may prove a discredit as lasting and extensive as the aforesaid weak admirers, mean enemies, mercenary scribblers, or curious simpletons, can make it.

I come now to a particular you complain of, my not answering your question about some party-papers, and their authors. This indeed I could not tell you, because I never was nor will be privy to such papers : and if by accident, through my acquaintance with any of the writers, I had known a thing they concealed, I should certainly never be the reporter of it.

For my waiting on you at your country-house, I have often wished it ; it was my compliance to a superior duty that hindered me, and one which you are too good a Christian to wish I should have broken, having never ventured to leave

my mother (at her great age) for more than a week, which is too little for such a journey.

Upon the whole, I must acquit myself of any act or thought in prejudice of the regard I owe you, as so long and obliging an acquaintance and correspondent. I am sure I have all the good wishes for yourself and your family that become a friend : there is no accident that can happen to your advantage, and no action that can redound to your credit, which I should not be ready to extol, or to rejoice in. And therefore I beg you to be assured I am in disposition and will, though not so much as I would be in testimonies or writing, your, &c.

LETTER CLI.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Richardson.

Twickenham, June 10, 1733.

As I know you and I mutually desire to see one another, I hoped that this day our wishes would have met, and brought you hither. And this for the very reason which possibly might hinder your coming, that my poor mother is dead *. I thank God, her death was as easy as her life was innocent : and as it cost her not a groan, nor even a sigh, there is yet upon her countenance such an expression of tranquillity, nay, almost of pleasure, that it is even amiable to behold it. It would afford the finest image of a saint expired that ever painting drew ; and it would be the greatest obligation which even that obliging art could ever bestow on a friend, if you would come and sketch it for me. I am sure, if there be no very prevalent obstacle, you will leave any common business to do this ; and I hope to see you this evening as late as you will, or to-morrow morning as early, before this winter-flower is faded. I will defer her interment till to-morrow night. I know you love me, or I could not have written this—I could not (at this time) have written at all.—Adieu ! May you die as happily ! Your, &c.

LETTER CLII.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Bethel.

Aug. 9, 1733.

You might well think me negligent or forgetful of you ; if true friendship and

* Mrs. Pope died the 7th of June, 1733, aged 93.

sincere esteem were to be measured by common forms and compliments. The truth is, I could not write then, without saying something of my own condition, and of my loss of so old and so deserving a parent, which really would have troubled you; or I must have kept a silence upon that head, which would not have suited that freedom and sincere opening of the heart which is due to you from me. I am now pretty well; but my home is uneasy to me still, and I am therefore wandering about all this summer. I was but four days at Twickenham since the occasion that made it so melancholy. I have been a fortnight in Essex, and am now at Dawley (whose master is your servant), and going to Cirencester to lord Bathurst. I shall also see Southampton with lord Peterborough. The court and Twit'nam I shall forsake together. I wish I did not leave our friend*, who deserves more quiet, and more health and happiness, than can be found in such a family. The rest of my acquaintance are tolerably happy in their various ways of life, whether court, country, or town; and Mr. Cleland is as well in the park as if he were in Paradise. I heartily hope Yorkshire is the same to you; and that no evil, moral or physical, may come near you.

I have now but too much melancholy leisure, and no other care but to finish my *Essay on Man*: there will be in it one line that may offend you (I fear); and yet I will not alter or omit it, unless you come to town and prevent me before I print it, which will be in a fortnight in all probability. In plain truth, I will not deny myself the greatest pleasure I am capable of receiving, because another may have the modesty not to share it. It is all a poor poet can do, to bear testimony to the virtue he cannot reach: besides that, in this age, I see too few good examples not to lay hold on any I can find. You see what an interested man I am. Adieu.

LETTER CLIII.

Mr. Pope to Dr. Arbuthnot.

July 26, 1734.

I THANK you for your letter, which has all those genuine marks of a good mind by which I have ever distinguished yours,

* Mrs. B.

and for which I have so long loved you. Our friendship has been constant, because it was grounded on good principles, and therefore not only uninterrupted by any distrust, but by any vanity, much less any interest.

What you recommend to me with the solemnity of a last request, shall have its due weight with me. That disdain and indignation against vice, is (I thank God) the only disdain and indignation I have: it is sincere, and it will be a lasting one. But sure it is as impossible to have a just abhorrence of vice, without hating the vicious, as to bear a true love for virtue, without loving the good. To reform and not to chastise, I am afraid, is impossible; and that the best precepts, as well as the best laws, would prove of small use, if there were no examples to enforce them. To attack vices in the abstract, without touching persons, may be safe fighting indeed, but it is fighting with shadows. General propositions are obscure, misty, and uncertain, compared with plain, full, and home examples: precepts only apply to our reason, which in most men is but weak: examples are pictures, and strike the senses, nay raise the passions, and call in those (the strongest and most general of all motives) to the aid of reformation. Every vicious man makes the case his own; and that is the only way by which such men can be affected, much less deterred; so that to chastise is to reform. The only sign by which I found my writings ever did any good, or had any weight, has been that they raised the anger of bad men. And my greatest comfort, an encouragement to proceed, has been to see that those who have no shame, and no fear of any thing else, have appeared touched by my satires.

As to your kind concern for my safety, I can guess what occasions it at this time. Some characters† I have drawn are such, that if there be any who deserve them, it is evidently a service to mankind to point those men out; yet such as, if all the world gave them, none, I think, will own they take to themselves. But if they should, those of whom all the world think in such a manner, must be men I cannot fear. Such in particular as have the meanness to do mischief in the dark, have seldom the courage to justify them

† The character of Sporus in the *Epistle* to Dr. Arbuthnot.

in the face of day; the talents that make a cheat or a whisperer, are not the same that qualify a man for an insulter; and as to private villany, it is not so safe to join in an assassination as in a libel. I will consult my safety so far as I think becomes a prudent man; but not so far as to omit any thing which I think becomes an honest one. As to personal attacks beyond the law, every man is liable to them: as for danger within the law, I am not guilty enough to fear any. For the good opinion of all the world, I know it is not to be had: for that of worthy men, I hope, I shall not forfeit it: for that of the great, or those in power, I may wish I had it; but if through misrepresentations (too common about persons in that station) I have it not, I shall be sorry, but not miserable in the want of it.

It is certain, much freer satirists than I, have enjoyed the encouragement and protection of the princes under whom they lived. Augustus and Mæcenas made Horace their companion, though he had been in arms on the side of Brutus; and allow me to remark, it was out of the suffering party too that they favoured and distinguished Virgil. You will not suspect me of comparing myself with Virgil and Horace, nor even with another court favourite, Boileau. I have always been too modest to imagine my panegyrics were worthy of a court; and that, I hope, will be thought the true reason why I have never offered any. I would only have observed, that it was under the greatest princes and best ministers, that moral satirists were most encouraged; and that then poets exercised the same jurisdiction over the follies, as historians did over the vices of men. It may also be worth considering, whether Augustus himself makes the greater figure in the writings of the former, or of the latter? and whether Nero and Domitian do not appear as ridiculous for their false taste and affectation in Persius and Juvenal, as odious for their bad government in Tacitus and Suetonius? In the first of these reigns it was that Horace was protected and caressed; and in the latter that Lucan was put to death, and Juvenal banished.

I would not have said so much, but to shew you my whole heart on this subject; and to convince you I am deliberately bent to perform that request which you

make your last to me, and to perform it with temper, justice, and resolution. As your approbation (being the testimony of a sound head and honest heart) does greatly confirm me herein, I wish you may live to see the effect it may hereafter have upon me, in something more deserving of that approbation. But if it be the will of God (which, I know, will also be yours) that we must separate, I hope it will be better for you than it can be for me. You are fitter to live, or to die, than any man I know. Adieu, my dear friend! and may God preserve your life easy, or make your death happy*.

LETTER CLIV.

Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.

June 18, 1714.

WHATEVER apologies it might become me to make at any other time for writing to you, I shall use none now, to a man who has owned himself as splenetic as a cat in the country. In that circumstance I know by experience a letter is a very useful as well as an amusing thing: if you are too busied in state affairs to read it, yet you may find entertainment in folding it into divers figures, either doubling it into a pyramidal, or twisting it into a serpentine form: or if your disposition should not be so mathematical, in taking it with you to that place where men of studious minds are apt to sit longer than ordinary; where, after an abrupt division of the paper, it may not be unpleasant to try to fit and rejoin the broken lines together. All these amusements I am no stranger to in the country, and doubt not (by this time) you begin to relish them, in your present contemplative situation.

I remember a man, who was thought to have some knowledge in the world, used to affirm, that no people in town ever complained they were forgotten by their friends in the country: but my increasing experience convinces me he was mistaken; for I find a great many here grievously complaining of you upon this score. I am told further, that you treat the few you correspond with in a very arrogant style, and tell them you admire at their insolence in disturbing your

* This excellent person died Feb. 27, 1734-5.

meditations, or even inquiring of your retreat*: but this I will not positively assert, because I never received any such insulting epistle from you. My lord Oxford says you have not written to him once since you went: but this perhaps may be only policy in him or you; and I, who am half a whig, must not entirely credit any thing he affirms. At Button's it is reported you are gone to Hanover, and that Gay goes only on an embassy to you. Others apprehend some dangerous state treatise from your retirement: and a wit, who affects to imitate Balsac, says, that the ministry now are like those heathens of old, who received their oracles from the woods. The gentlemen of the Roman Catholic persuasion are not unwilling to credit me, when I whisper, that you are gone to meet some Jesuits commissioned from the court of Rome, in order to settle the most convenient methods to be taken for the coming of the Pretender. Dr. Arbuthnot is singular in his opinion, and imagines your only design is to attend at full leisure to the life and adventures of Scriblerus. This indeed must be granted of greater importance than all the rest; and I wish I could promise so well of you. The top of my own ambition is to contribute to that great work; and I shall translate Homer by the bye. Mr. Gay has acquainted you what progress I have made in it. I cannot name Mr. Gay, without all the acknowledgments which I shall ever owe you, on his account. If I writ this in verse, I would tell you, you are like the sun; and while men imagine you to be retired or absent, are hourly exerting your indulgence, and bringing things to maturity for their advantage. Of all the world, you are the man (without flattery) who serve your friends with the least ostentation; it is almost ingratitude to thank you, considering your temper; and this is the period of all my letter which, I fear, you will think the most impertinent. I am, with the truest affection, yours, &c.

* Some time before the death of queen Anne, when her ministers were quarrelling, and the Dean could not reconcile them, he retired to a friend's house in Berkshire, and never saw them after.

LETTER CLV.

Anthony Henley, Esq. to Dr. Swift.

Nov. 2, 1708.

Dear Doctor,

THOUGH you will not send me your broomstick†, I will send you as good a reflection upon death as even Adrian's himself, though the fellow was but an old farmer of mine that made it. He had been ill a good while; and when his friends saw him a-going, they all came croaking about him as usual; and one of them asking him how he did? he replied, "In great pain. If I could but get this same breath out of my body, I would take care, by G—d, how I let it come in again." This, if it were put into fine Latin, I fancy would make as good a sound as any I have met with. I am, &c.

LETTER CLVI.

Lord Bolingbroke to Dr. Swift.

I AM not so lazy as Pope, and therefore you must not expect from me the same indulgence to laziness; in defending his own cause he pleads yours, and becomes your advocate while he appeals to you as his judge: you will do the same on your part; and I, and the rest of your common friends, shall have great justice to expect from two such righteous tribunals. You resemble perfectly the two alehouse-keepers in Holland, who were at the same time burgomasters of the town, and taxed one another's bills alternately. I declare beforehand I will not stand to the award; my title to your friendship is good, and wants neither deeds nor writings to confirm it; but annual acknowledgments at least are necessary to preserve it: and I begin to suspect, by your defrauding me of them, that you hope in time to dispute it, and to urge prescription against me. I would not say one word to you about myself (since it is a subject on which you appear to have no curiosity), was it not to try how far the contrast between Pope's fortune and manner of life and mine may be carried.

† Meditations on a Broomstick, written by Dr. Swift about this time.

I have been, then, infinitely more uniform and less dissipated than when you knew me, and cared for me. That love which I used to scatter with such profusion among the female kind, has been these many years devoted to one object. A great many misfortunes (for so they are called, though sometimes very improperly), and a retirement from the world, have made that just and nice discrimination between my acquaintance and my friends, which we have seldom sagacity enough to make for ourselves: those insects of various hues, which used to hum and buzz about me, while I stood in the sunshine, have disappeared since I lived in the shade. No man comes to a hermitage but for the sake of the hermit; a few philosophical friends come often to mine, and they are such as you would be glad to live with, if a dull climate and duller company have not altered you extremely from what you were nine years ago.

The hoarse voice of party was never heard in this quiet place; gazettes and pamphlets are banished from it; and if the lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff be admitted, this distinction is owing to some strokes by which it is judged that this illustrious philosopher had (like the Indian Fohu, the Grecian Pythagoras, the Persian Zoroaster, and others his precursors among the Zabrians, Magians, and the Egyptian seers) both his outward and his inward doctrine, and that he was of no side at the bottom. When I am there, I forget I was ever of any party myself; nay, I am often so happily absorbed by the abstracted reason of things, that I am ready to imagine there never was any such monster as Party. Alas! I am soon awakened from that pleasing dream by the Greek and Roman historians, by Guicciardine, by Machiavel, and Thuanus; for I have vowed to read no history of our own country till that body of it which you promise to finish appears.

I am under no apprehension that a glut of study and retirement should cast me back into the hurry of the world; on the contrary, the single regret which I ever feel, is that I fell so late into this course of life; my philosophy grows confirmed by habit; and if you and I meet again, I will extort this approbation from you: *Jam non consilio bonus, sed more co perductus, ut non tantum rectè*

facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim. The little incivilities I have met with from opposite sets of people, have been so far from rendering me violent or sour to any, that I think myself obliged to them all: some have cured me of my fears by shewing me how impotent the malice of the world is; others have cured me of my hopes, by shewing how precarious popular friendships are; all have cured me of surprise. In driving me out of party, they have driven me out of cursed company; and in stripping me of titles, and rank, and estate, and such trinkets, which every man that will may spare, they have given me that which no man can be happy without.

Reflection and habit have rendered the world so indifferent to me, that I am neither afflicted nor rejoiced, angry nor pleased, at what happens in it, any further than personal friendships interest me in the affairs of it; and this principle extends my cares but a little way. Perfect tranquillity is the general tenour of my life; good digestions, serene weather, and some other mechanic springs, wind me above it now and then, but I never fall below it; I am sometimes gay, but I am never sad. I have gained new friends, and have lost some old ones; my acquisitions of this kind give me a good deal of pleasure, because they have not been made lightly. I know no vows so solemn as those of friendship, and therefore a pretty long noviciate of acquaintance should methinks precede them; my losses of this kind give me but little trouble; I contributed not to them; and a friend who breaks with me unjustly, is not worth preserving. As soon as I leave this town (which will be in a few days) I shall fall back into that course of life which keeps knaves and fools at a great distance from me: I have an aversion to them both; but in the ordinary course of life I think I can bear the sensible knave better than the fool. One must indeed with the former be in some or other of the attitudes of those wooden men whom I have seen before a sword-cutler's shop in Germany; but even in these constrained postures the witty rascal will divert me; and he that diverts me does me a great deal of good, and lays me under an obligation to him, which I am not obliged to pay him in another coin: the fool obliges me to

be almost as much upon my guard as the knave, and he makes me no amends; he numbs me like the torpor, or he teases me like the fly. This is the picture of an old friend, and more like him than that will be which you once asked, and which he will send you, if you continue still to desire it.—Adieu, dear Swift; with all thy faults I love thee entirely; make an effort, and love me on with all mine.

LETTER CLVII.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.

Dublin, Sept. 20, 1723.

RETURNING from a summer expedition of four months, on account of my health, I found a letter from you, with an appendix longer than yours from lord Bolingbroke. I believe there is not a more miserable malady than an unwillingness to write letters to our best friends; and a man might be philosopher enough in finding out reasons for it. One thing is clear, that it shews a mighty difference betwixt friendship and love; for a lover (as I have heard) is always scribbling to his mistress. If I could permit myself to believe what your civility makes you say, that I am still remembered by my friends in England, I am in the right to keep myself here.—*Non sum qualis eram.* I left you in a period of life when one year does more execution than three at yours; to which, if you add the dulness of the air and of the people, it will make a terrible sum. I have no very strong faith in you pretenders to retirement; you are not of an age for it, nor have gone through either good or bad fortune enough to go into a corner, and form conclusions *de contemptu mundi et fuga sæculi*, unless a poet grows weary of too much applause, as ministers do of too much weight of business.

Your happiness is greater than your merit, in choosing your favourites so indifferently among either party: this you owe partly to your education, and partly to your genius employing you in an art in which faction has nothing to do; for I suppose Virgil and Horace are equally read by whigs and tories. You have no more to do with the constitution of church and state than a Christian at Constantinople; and you are so much

the wiser and the happier, because both parties will approve your poetry as long as you are known to be of neither.

Your notions of friendship are new to me: I believe every man is born with his *quantum*; and he cannot give to one without robbing another. I very well know to whom I would give the first places in my friendship, but they are not in the way; I am condemned to another scene, and therefore I distribute it in pennyworths to those about me, and who displease me least; and should do the same to my fellow-prisoners if I were condemned to jail. I can likewise tolerate knaves much better than fools, because their knavery does me no hurt in the commerce I have with them, which however I own is more dangerous, though not so troublesome as that of fools. I have often endeavoured to establish a friendship among all men of genius, and would fain have it done; they are seldom above three or four contemporaries; and if they could be united, would drive the world before them. I think it was so among the poets in the time of Augustus; but envy, and party, and pride, have hindered it among us. I do not include the subalterns, of which you are seldom without a large tribe. Under the name of poets and scribblers, I suppose you mean the fools you are content to see sometimes, when they happen to be modest; which was not frequent among them while I was in the world.

I would describe to you my way of living, if any method could be called so in this country. I choose companions out of those of least consequence and most compliance: I read the most trifling books I can find; and whenever I write, it is upon the most trifling subjects; but riding, walking, and sleeping, take up eighteen of the twenty-four hours. I procrastinate more than I did twenty years ago; and have several things to finish, which I put off to twenty years hence; *Hæc est vita solutorum*, &c. I send you the compliments of a friend of yours, who hath passed four months this summer with two grave acquaintance at his country-house, without ever once going to Dublin, which is but eight miles distant; yet, when he returns to London, I will engage you will find him as deep in the Court of Requests, the Park, the Operas, and the

coffee house, as any man there. I am now with him for a few days.

You must remember me with great affection to Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Congreve, and Gay. I think there are no more *codem tertios* between you and me, except Mr. Jervas, to whose house I address this, for want of knowing where you live: for it was not clear from your last whether you lodge with lord Peterborough, or he with you. I am ever, &c.

LETTER CLVIII.

Mr. Gay to Dr. Swift.

Nov. 17, 1726.

ABOUT ten days ago a book was published here of the Travels of one Gulliver, which hath been the conversation of the whole town ever since: the whole impression sold in a week; and nothing is more diverting than to hear the different opinions people give of it, though all agree in liking it extremely. It is generally said that you are the author; but I am told the bookseller declares he knows not from what hand it came. From the highest to the lowest it is universally read; from the cabinet council to the nursery. The politicians to a man agree, that it is free from particular reflections, but that the satire on general societies of men is too severe. Not but we now and then meet with people of greater perspicuity, who are in search of particular applications in every leaf; and it is highly probable we shall have keys published to give light into Gulliver's design. Lord —— is the person who least approves it, blaming it as a design of evil consequence to depreciate human nature, at which it cannot be wondered that he takes most offence, being himself the most accomplished of his species, and so losing more than any other of that praise which is due both to the dignity and virtue of a man. Your friend, my lord Harcourt, commends it very much, though he thinks in some places the matter too far carried. The duchess dowager of Marlborough is in raptures at it; she says she can dream of nothing else since she read it; she declares that she has now found out, that her whole life hath been lost in caressing the worst part of mankind, and treating the best as her foes; and that if she

knew Gulliver, though he had been the worst enemy she ever had, she would give up her present acquaintance for his friendship. You may see by this, that you are not much injured by being supposed the author of this piece. If you are, you have disobliged us, and two or three of your best friends, in not giving us the least hint of it while you were with us; and in particular Dr. Arbuthnot, who says it is ten thousand pities he had not known it, he could have added such abundance of things upon every subject. Among lady-critics, some have found out that Mr. Gulliver had a particular malice to maids of honour. Those of them who frequent the church, say, his design is impious: and that it is depreciating the works of the Creator. Notwithstanding, I am told the princess hath read it with great pleasure. As to other critics, they think the flying island is the least entertaining; and so great an opinion the town have of the impossibility of Gulliver's writing at all below himself, it is agreed that part was not writ by the same hand: though this hath its defenders too. It hath passed lords and commons *nemine contradicente*; and the whole town, men, women, and children, are quite full of it.

Perhaps I may all this time be talking to you of a book you have never seen, and which hath not yet reached Ireland; if it hath not, I believe what we have said will be sufficient to recommend it to your reading, and that you will order me to send it to you.

But it will be much better to come over yourself, and read it here, where you will have the pleasure of variety of commentators, to explain the difficult passages to you.

We all rejoice that you have fixed the precise time of your coming to be *cum hirundine prima*; which we modern naturalists pronounce, ought to be reckoned, contrary to Pliny, in this northern latitude of fifty-two degrees, from the end of February, Styl. Greg. at farthest. But to us your friends, the coming of such a black swallow as you, will make a summer in the worst of seasons. We are no less glad at your mention of Twickenham and Dawley; and in town you know you have a lodging at court.

The princess is clothed in Irish silk; pray give our service to the weavers. We are strangely surprised to hear that

the bells in Ireland ring without your money. I hope you do not write the thing that is not. We are afraid that B— hath been guilty of that crime, that you (like Houynhum) have treated him as a Yahoo, and discarded him your service. I fear you do not understand these modish terms, which every creature now understands but yourself.

You tell us your wine is bad, and that the clergy do not frequent your house; which we look upon to be tautology. The best advice we can give you is, to make them a present of your wine, and come away to better.

You fancy we envy you; but you are mistaken: we envy those you are with; for we cannot envy the man we love. Adieu.

LETTER CLIX.

Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.

Oct. 2, 1727.

It is a perfect trouble to me to write to you; and your kind letter left for me at Mr. Gay's affected me so much, that it made me like a girl. I cannot tell what to say to you; I only feel that I wish you well in every circumstance of life; that it is almost as good to be hated as to be loved, considering the pain it is to minds of any tender turn, to find themselves so utterly impotent to do any good, or give any ease to those who deserve most from us. I would very fain know as soon as you recover your complaints, or any part of them. Would to God I could ease any of them, or had been able even to have alleviated any! I found I was not, and truly it grieved me. I was sorry to find you could think yourself easier in any house than mine, though at the same time I can allow for a tenderness in your way of thinking, even when it seemed to want that tenderness. I cannot explain my meaning, perhaps you know it: but the best way of convincing you of my indulgence will be, if I live, to visit you in Ireland, and act there as much in my own way as you did here in yours. I will not leave your roof, if I am ill. To your bad health I fear there was added some disagreeable news from Ireland, which might occasion your sudden departure: for the last time I saw you, you assured me you would not leave us

the whole winter, unless your health grew better; and I do not find it did. I never complied so unwillingly in my life with any friend as with you in staying so entirely from you; nor could I have had the constancy to do it, if you had not promised that, before you went, we should meet, and you would send to us all to come. I have given your remembrances to those you mention in yours: we are quite sorry for you, I mean for ourselves. I hope, as you do, that we shall meet in a more durable and more satisfactory state; but the less sure I am of that, the more I would indulge it in this. We are to believe we shall have something better than even a friend there; but certainly here we have nothing so good. Adieu, for this time; may you find every friend you go to as pleased and happy as every friend you went from is sorry and troubled. Yours, &c.

LETTER CLIX.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.

Dublin, Oct. 12, 1727.

I HAVE been long reasoning with myself upon the condition I am in; and in conclusion have thought it best to return to what fortune hath made my home: I have there a large house, and servants and conveniences about me. I may be worse than I am; and I have nowhere to retire to, therefore thought it best to return to Ireland, rather than go to any distant place in England. Here is my maintenance, and here my convenience. If it pleases God to restore me to my health, I shall readily make a third journey; if not, we must part as all human creatures have parted. You are the best and kindest friend in the world; and I know nobody alive or dead to whom I am so much obliged; and if ever you made me angry, it was for your too much care about me. I have often wished that God Almighty would be so easy to the weakness of mankind, as to let old friends be acquainted in another state: and if I were to write an Utopia for heaven, that would be one of my schemes. This wildness you must allow for, because I am giddy and deaf.

I find it more convenient to be sick here, without the vexation of making

my friends uneasy: yet my giddiness alone would not have done, if that unsociable comfortless deafness had not quite tired me. And I believe I should have returned from the inn, if I had not feared it was only a short intermission, and the year was late, and my licence expiring. Surely, besides all other faults, I should be a very ill judge, to doubt your friendship and kindness. But it hath pleased God that you are not in a state of health to be mortified with the care and sickness of a friend. Two sick friends never did well together; such an office is fitter for servants and humble companions, to whom it is wholly indifferent whether we give them trouble or no. The case would be quite otherwise if you were with me: you could not refuse to see any body; and here is a large house, where we need not hear each other if we were both sick. I have a race of orderly elderly people of both sexes at command, who are of no consequence, and have gifts proper for attending us; who can bawl when I am deaf, and tread softly when I am only giddy and would sleep.

I had another reason for my haste hither, which was changing my agent, the old one having terribly involved my little affairs: to which however I am grown so indifferent, that I believe I shall lose two or three hundred pounds rather than plague myself with accounts; so that I am very well qualified to be a lord, and put into Peter Walter's hands.

Pray God continue and increase Mr. Congreve's amendment, though he does not deserve it like you, having been too lavish of that health which nature gave him.

I hope my Whitehall landlord is nearer to a place than when I left him; as the preacher said, "the day of judgment was nearer than ever it had been before."

Pray God send you health, *det salutem, det opes; animum æquum tibi ipse parabis*. You see Horace wished for money, as well as health; and I would hold a crown he kept a coach; and I shall never be a friend to the court till you do so too. Yours, &c.

LETTER CLXI.

Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.

March 23, 1727-8.

I SEND you a very odd thing, a paper printed in Boston in New-England; wherein you will find a real person, a member of their parliament, of the name of Jonathan Gulliver. If the fame of that traveller has travelled thither, it has travelled very quick, to have folks christened already by the name of the supposed author. But if you object; that no child so lately christened could be arrived at years of maturity to be elected into parliament, I reply (to solve the riddle) that the person is an *Anabaptist*, and not christened till full age; which sets all right. However it be, the accident is very singular, that these two names should be united.

Mr. Gay's Opera has been acted near forty days running, and will certainly continue the whole season. So he has more than a fence about his thousand pound: he will soon be thinking of a fence about his two thousand. Shall no one of us live as we would wish each other to live? Shall he have no annuity, you no settlement on this side, and I no prospect of getting to you on the other? This world is made for Cæsar, as Cato said: for ambitious, false, or flattering people to domineer in: nay, they would not, by their good will, leave us our very books, thoughts, or words, in quiet. I despise the world yet, I assure you, more than either Gay or you; and the court more than all the rest of the world. As for those scribblers for whom you apprehend I would suppress my *Dulness* (which by the way, for the future, you are to call by a more pompous name, *The Dunciad*), how much that nest of hornets are my regard, will easily appear to you when you read the *Treatise of the Bathos*.

At all adventures, yours and my name shall stand linked as friends to posterity, both in verse and prose, and (as Tully calls it) in *consuetudine studiorum*. Would to God our persons could but as well, and as surely be inseparable! I find my other ties dropping from me; some worn off, some torn off, others relaxing daily: my greatest, both by duty, gratitude, and humanity, time is shaking every moment; and it now hangs but by a thread!

I am many years the older, for living so much with one so old ; much the more helpless, for having been so long helped and tended by her ; much the more considerate and tender, for a daily commerce with one who required me justly to be both to her ; and consequently the more melancholy and thoughtful, and the less fit for others, who want only in a companion or a friend to be amused or entertained. My constitution too has had its share of decay as well as my spirits ; and I am as much in the decline at forty as you at sixty. I believe we shall be fit to live together, could I get a little more health, which might make me not quite insupportable : your deafness would agree with my dulness ; you would not want me to speak when you could not hear. But God forbid you should be as destitute of the social comforts of life as I must when I lose my mother ; or that ever you should lose your more useful acquaintance so utterly as to turn your thoughts to such a broken reed as I am, who could so ill supply your wants. I am extremely troubled at the returns of your deafness ; you cannot be too particular in the accounts of your health to me ; every thing you do or say in this kind obliges me, nay delights me, to see the justice you do me in thinking me concerned in all your concerns ; so that though the pleasantest thing you can tell me be that you are better or easier ; next to that, it pleases me that you make me the person you would complain to.

As the obtaining the love of valuable men is the happiest end I know of this life, so the next felicity is to get rid of fools and scoundrels ; which I cannot but own to you was one part of my design in falling upon these authors, whose incapacity is not greater than their insincerity, and of whom I have always found (if I may quote myself),

That each bad author is as bad a friend.

This poem will rid me of those insects.

*Cedite, Romani scriptores, cedite, Graii ;
Nescio quid majus nascitur Iliade.*

I mean that my *Iliad* ; and I call it *Nescio quid*, which is a degree of modesty ; but however, if it silence these fellows*,

* It did, in a little time, effectually silence them.

it must be something greater than any *Iliad* in Christendom. Adieu.

LETTER CLXII.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.

Dublin, May 10, 1723.

I HAVE with great pleasure shown the New England newspaper, with the two names Jonathan Gulliver, and I remember Mr. Fortescue sent you an account from the assizes of one Lemuel Gulliver who had a cause there, and lost it on his ill reputation of being a liar. These are not the only observations I have made upon odd strange accidents in trifles, which in things of great importance would have been matter for historians. Mr. Gay's Opera hath been acted here twenty times ; and my lord lieutenant tells me it is very well performed ; he hath seen it often, and approves it much.

You give a most melancholy account of yourself, and which I do not approve. I reckon that a man, subject like us to bodily infirmities, should only occasionally converse with great people, notwithstanding all their good qualities, easinesses, and kindnesses. There is another race which I prefer before them, as beef and mutton for constant diet before partridges : I mean a middle kind both for understanding and fortune, who are perfectly easy, never impertinent, complying in every thing, ready to do a hundred little offices that you and I may often want, who dine and sit with me five times for once that I go to them, and whom I can tell without offence that I am otherwise engaged at present. This you cannot expect from any of those that either you or I, or both, are acquainted with on your side, who are only fit for our healthy seasons, and have much business of their own. God forbid I should condemn you to Ireland (*Quamquam O*) ; and for England, I despair ; and indeed a change of affairs would come too late at my season of life, and might probably produce nothing on my behalf. You have kept Mrs. Pope longer, and have had her care beyond what from nature you could expect ; not but her loss will be very sensible, whenever it shall happen. I say one thing, that both summers and winters are milder here than with

you ; all things for life in general better for a middling fortune : you will have an absolute command of your company, with whatever obsequiousness or freedom you may expect or allow. I have an elderly housekeeper, who hath been my *W-p-le* above thirty years, whenever I lived in this kingdom. I have the command of one or two villas near this town : you have a warm apartment in this house, and two gardens for amusement. I have said enough, yet not half. Except absence from friends, I confess freely that I have no discontent at living here ; besides what arises from a silly spirit of liberty, which, as it neither sours my drink, nor hurts my meat, nor spoils my stomach farther than in imagination, so I resolve to throw it off.

You talk of this Dunciad : but I am impatient to have it *volare per ora*—there is now a vacancy for fame ; the Beggar's Opera hath done its task, *discedit uti conviva satur*. Adieu.

LETTER CLXIII.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.

Dublin, Feb. 13, 1723.

I LIVED very easily in the country : sir A. is a man of sense, and a scholar, has a good voice, and my lady a better ; she is perfectly well-bred, and desirous to improve her understanding, which is very good, but cultivated too much like a fine lady. She was my pupil there, and severely chid when she read wrong ; with that, and walking, and making twenty little amusing improvements, and writing family verses of mirth by way of libels on my lady, my time past very well and in very great order ; infinitely better than here, where I see no creature but my servants and my old Presbyterian housekeeper, denying myself to every body, till I shall recover my ears.

The account of another lord lieutenant was only in a common newspaper, when I was in the country ; and if it should have happened to be true, I would have desired to have had access to him, as the situation I am in requires. But this renews the grief for the death of our friend Mr. Congreve, whom I loved from my youth, and who surely, besides his other talents, was a very agreeable companion. He had the misfortune to squander away a very good constitution

in his younger days ; and I think a man of sense and merit like him, is bound in conscience to preserve his health for the sake of his friends, as well as of himself. Upon his own account I could not much desire the continuance of his life, under so much pain, and so many infirmities. Years have not yet hardened me ; and I have an addition of weight on my spirits since we lost him ; though I saw him so seldom, and possibly, if he had lived on, should never have seen him more. I do not only wish, as you ask me, that I was unacquainted with any deserving person, but almost that I never had a friend. Here is an ingenious, good-humoured physician, a fine gentleman, an excellent scholar, easy in his fortunes, kind to every body, hath abundance of friends, entertains them often and liberally, they pass the evening with him at cards, with plenty of good meat and wine, eight or a dozen together ; he loves them all, and they him. He has twenty of these at command ; if one of them dies, it is no more than, Poor Tom ! he gets another, or takes up with the rest, and is no more moved than at the loss of his cat ; he offends nobody, is easy with every body. Is not this the true happy man ? I was describing him to my lady A—, who knows him too ; but she hates him mortally by my character, and will not drink his health : I would give half my fortune for the same temper, and yet I cannot say I love it, for I do not love my lord—who is much of the doctor's nature. I hear Mr. Gay's second Opera, which you mention, is forbid ; and then he will be once more fit to be advised, and reject your advice. Adieu.

LETTER CLXIV.

Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift.

Oct. 9, 1729.

It pleases me that you received my books at last ; but you have never once told me if you approve the whole, or disapprove not of some parts of the Commentary, &c. It was my principal aim in the entire work to perpetuate the friendship between us, and to shew that the friends or the enemies of the one were the friends or enemies of the other. If in any particular any thing be stated or mentioned in a different manner from what you like, pray tell me freely, that

the new editions now coming out here may have it rectified. You will find the octavo rather more correct than the quarto, with some addition to the Notes and Epigrams cast in, which I wish had been increased by your acquaintance in Ireland. I rejoice in hearing that Draper's Hill is to emulate Parnassus; I fear the country about it is as much impoverished. I truly share in all that troubles you, and wish you removed from a scene of distress, which I know works your compassionate temper too strongly; but if we are not to see you here, I believe I shall once in my life see you there. You think more for me, and about me, than any friend I have; and you think better for me. Perhaps you will not be contented, though I am, that the additional 100*l.* a year is only for my life. My mother is yet living, and I thank God for it; she will never be troublesome to me, if she be not so to herself; but a melancholy object it is, to observe the gradual decays both of body and mind, in a person to whom one is tied by the links of both. I cannot tell whether her death itself would be so afflicting.

You are too careful of my worldly affairs; I am rich enough, and I can afford to give away 100*l.* a-year. Do not be angry: I will not live to be very old; I have revelations to the contrary. I would not crawl upon the earth without doing a little good when I have a mind to do it: I will enjoy the pleasure of what I give, by giving it alive, and seeing another enjoy it. When I die, I should be ashamed to leave enough to build me a monument, if there were a wanting friend above ground.

Mr. Gay assures me his 3000*l.* is kept entire and sacred; he seems to languish after a line from you, and complains tenderly. Lord Bolingbroke has told me ten times over he was going to write to you. Has he, or not? The Doctor is unalterable, both in friendship and quadrille: his wife has been very near death last week: his two brothers buried their wives within these six weeks. Gay is sixty miles off, and has been so all this summer, with the duke and duchess of Queensbury. He is the same man: so is every one here that you know: mankind is unamendable. *Optimus ille qui minimus urgetur*. Poor Mrs. — is like the rest, she cries at the thorn in her

foot, but will suffer nobody to pull it out. The court lady I have a good opinion of; yet I have treated her more negligently than you would do, because you like to see the inside of a court, which I do not. I have seen her but twice. You have a desperate hand at dashing out a character by great strokes, and at the same time a delicate one at fine touches. God forbid you should draw mine, if I were conscious of any guilt: but if I were conscious only of folly, God send it! for as nobody can detect a great fault so well as you, nobody would so well hide a small one: but after all, that lady means to do good, and does no harm; which is a vast deal for a courtier. I can assure you that lord Peterborow always speaks kindly of you, and certainly has as great a mind to be your friend as any one. I must throw away my pen; it cannot, it never will, tell you what I inwardly am to you. *Quod nequeo monstrare, et sentio tantum*.

LETTER CLXV.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.

Oct. 31, 1729.

You were so careful of sending me the Dunciad, that I have received five of them, and have pleased four friends. I am one of every body who approve every part of it, text and comment: but am one abstracted from every body, in the happiness of being called your friend, while wit, and humour, and politeness, shall have any memorial among us. As for your octavo edition, we know nothing of it; for we have an octavo of our own, which has sold wonderfully, considering our poverty, and dulness the consequence of it.

I writ this post to lord B., and tell him in my letter, that with a great deal of loss for a frolic, I will fly as soon as build; I have neither years, nor spirits, nor money, nor patience, for such amusements. The frolic is gone off, and I am only 100*l.* the poorer; but this kingdom is grown so excessively poor, that we wise men must think of nothing but getting a little ready money. It is thought there are [not two hundred] thousand pounds in specie in the whole island; for we return thrice as much to our absentees as we get by trade, and so are all inevitably undone; which I have been

telling them in print these ten years, to as little purpose as if it came from the pulpit; and this is enough for Irish politics, which I only mention, because it so nearly touches myself. I must repeat what, I believe, I have said before, that I pity you much more than Mrs. Pope. Such a parent and friend, hourly declining before your eyes, is an object very unfit for your health, and duty, and tender disposition; and I pray God it may not affect you too much. I am as much satisfied that your additional 100*l. per annum* is for your life, as if it were for ever. You have enough to leave your friends: I would not have them glad to be rid of you; and I shall take care that none but my enemies will be glad to get rid of me. You have embroiled me with lord B—, about the figure of living, and the pleasure of giving. I am under the necessity of some little paltry figure in the station I am; but I make it as little as possible. As to the other part you are base, because I thought myself as great a giver as ever was of my ability; and yet in proportion you exceed, and have kept it till now even a secret from me, when I wondered how you were able to live with your whole little revenue. Adieu.

LETTER CLXVI.

Lord Bolingbroke to Dr. Swift.

Nov. 19, 1729.

I FIND that you have laid aside your project of building in Ireland, and that we shall see you in this island *cum zephyris et hirundine prima*. I know not whether the love of fame increases as we advance in age; sure I am that the force of friendship does. I loved you almost twenty years ago; I thought of you as well as I do now; better was beyond the power of conception; or, to avoid an equivocal, beyond the extent of my ideas. Whether you are more obliged to me for loving you as well when I knew you less, or for loving you as well after loving you so many years, I shall not determine. What I would say is this: whilst my mind grows daily more independent of the world, and feels less need of leaning on external objects, the ideas of friendship return oftener, they busy me, they warm me more: is it that we

grow more tender as the moment of our great separation approaches? Or is it that they who are to live together in another state (for *vera amicitia non nisi inter bonos*) begin to feel more strongly that divine sympathy which is to be the great band of their future society? There is no one thought that soothes my mind like this; I encourage my imagination to pursue it, and am heartily afflicted when another faculty* of the intellect comes boisterously in, and wakes me from so pleasing a dream, if it be a dream. I will dwell no more on æconomics than I have done in my former letter. Thus much only I will say, that *otium cum dignitate* is to be had with 500*l. a-year*, as well as with 5000*l.*; the difference will be found in the value of the man, and not in that of the estate. I do assure you, that I have never quitted the design of collecting, revising, improving, and extending several materials which are still in my power; and I hope that the time of setting myself about this last work of my life is not far off. Many papers of much curiosity and importance are lost, and some of them in a manner which would surprise and anger you. However, I shall be able to convey several great truths to posterity, so clearly, and so authentically, that the Burnets and the Oldmixons of another age may rail, but not be able to deceive. Adieu, my friend. I have taken up more of this paper than belongs to me, since Pope is to write to you; no matter, for, upon recollection, the rules of proportion are not broken; he will say as much to you in one page as I have said in three. Bid him talk to you of the work he is about, I hope in good earnest; it is a fine one, and will be, in his hands, an original†. His sole complaint is, that he finds it too easy in the execution. This flatters his laziness; it flatters my judgment, who always thought that (universal as his talents are) this is eminently and peculiarly his, above all the writers I know living or dead: I do not except Horace. Adieu.

* Viz. Reason.

† Essay on Man.

LETTER CLXVII.

From the same to the same.

March 29.

I HAVE delayed several posts answering your letter of January last, in hopes of being able to speak to you about a project which concerns us both, but me the most, since the success of it would bring us together. It has been a good while in my head, and at my heart; if it can be set a-going, you shall hear more of it. I was ill in the beginning of winter for near a week, but in no danger either from the nature of my distemper, or from the attendance of three physicians. Since that bilious intermitting fever, I have had, as I had before, better health than the regard I have paid to health deserves. We are both in the decline of life, my dear dean, and have been some years going down the hill; let us make the passage as smooth as we can. Let us fence against physical evil by care, and the use of those means which experience must have pointed out to us: let us fence against moral evil by philosophy. I renounce the alternative you propose. But we may, nay (if we will follow nature, and do not work up imagination against her plainest dictates), we shall of course grow every year more indifferent to life, and to the affairs and interests of a system out of which we are soon to go. This is much better than stupidity. The decay of passion strengthens philosophy; for passion may decay, and stupidity not succeed. Passions (says Pope, our divine, as you will see one time or other) are the *gales* of life: let us not complain that they do not blow a storm. What hurt does age do us, in subduing what we toil to subdue all our lives? It is now six in the morning: I recall the time (and am glad it is over) when about this hour I used to be going to bed surfeited with pleasure, or jaded with business: my head often full of schemes, and my heart as often full of anxiety. Is it a misfortune, think you, that I rise at this hour, refreshed, serene, and calm? that the past, and even the present affairs of life stand like objects at a distance from me, where I can keep off the disagreeable so as not to be strongly affected by them, and from whence I can draw the others nearer to me? Passions in their force would bring all these,

nay, even future contingencies, about my ears at once, and reason would but ill defend me in the scuffle.

I leave Pope to speak for himself; but I must tell you how much my wife is obliged to you. She says, she would find strength enough to nurse you, if you were here, and yet, God knows, she is extremely weak: the slow fever works under, and mines the constitution; we keep it off sometimes, but still it returns, and makes new breaches before nature can repair the old ones. I am not ashamed to say to you, that I admire her more every hour of my life: Death is not to her the King of Terrors; she beholds him without the least. When she suffers much, she wishes for him as a deliverer from pain; when life is tolerable, she looks on him with dislike, because he is to separate her from those friends to whom she is more attached than to life itself.—You shall not stay for my next so long as you have for this letter; and in every one, Pope shall write something much better than the scraps of old philosophers, which were the presents (*munuscula*) that stoical fop Seneca used to send in every epistle to his friend Lucilius.

P. S. My lord has spoken justly of his lady: why not I of my mother? Yesterday was her birthday, now entering on the ninety-first year of her age; her memory much diminished, but her senses very little hurt, her sight and hearing good; she sleeps not ill, eats moderately, drinks water, says her prayers: this is all she does. I have reason to thank God for her continuing so long a very good and tender parent, and for allowing me to exercise for some years those cares which are now as necessary to her as hers have been to me. An object of this sort daily before one's eyes very much softens the mind, but perhaps may hinder it from the willingness of contracting other ties of the like domestic nature, when one finds how painful it is even to enjoy the tender pleasures. I have formerly made some strong efforts to get and to deserve a friend: perhaps it were wiser never to attempt it, but live extempore, and look upon the world only as a place to pass through, just pay your hosts their due, disperse a little charity, and hurry on. Yet I am just now writing (or rather planning) a book; to

make mankind look upon this life with comfort and pleasure, and put morality in good humour.—And just now, too, I am going to see one I love very tenderly; and to-morrow to entertain several civil people, whom if we call friends, it is by the courtesy of England.—*Sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras*. While we do live, we must make the best of life.

Cantantes licet usque (minus via lædēt) eamus,

as the shepherd said in Virgil, when the road was long and heavy. I am yours.

LETTER CLXVIII.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Gay.

Dublin, Nov. 19, 1730.

I WRIT to you a long letter about a fortnight past, concluding you were in London, from whence I understood one of your former was dated: nor did I imagine you were gone back to Aimsbury so late in the year, at which season I take the country to be only a scene for those who have been ill-used by a court on account of their virtues; which is a state of happiness the more valuable, because it is not accompanied by envy, although nothing deserves it more. I would gladly sell a dukedom to lose favour in the manner their graces have done. I believe my lord Carteret, since he is no longer lieutenant, may not wish me ill; and I have told him often that I only hated him as lieutenant: I confess he had a genteeler manner of binding the chains of this kingdom than most of his predecessors; and I confess, at the same time, that he had (six times) a regard to my recommendation, by preferring so many of my friends in the church; the two last acts of his favour were to add to the dignities of Dr. Delany and Mr. Stopford, the last of whom was by you and Mr. Pope put into Mr. Pulteney's hands. I told you in my last that a continuance of giddiness (though not in a violent degree) prevented my thoughts of England at present. For in my case a domestic life is necessary, where I can with the centurion say to my servant, Go, and he goeth; and Do this, and he doth it. I now hate all people whom I cannot command; and consequently a duchess is at this time the hatefullest lady in the world to me,

one only excepted, and I beg her grace's pardon for that exception; for, in the way I mean, her grace is ten thousand times more hateful. I confess I begin to apprehend you will squander my money, because I hope you never less wanted it; and, if you go on with success for two years longer, I fear I shall not have a farthing of it left. The doctor hath ill-informed me, who says that Mr. Pope is at present the chief poetical favourite; yet Mr. Pope himself talks like a philosopher, and one wholly retired. But the vogue of our few honest folks here is, that Duck is absolutely to succeed Eusden in the laurel, the contention being between Concannen or Theobald, or some other hero of the Dunciad. I never charged you for not talking; but the dubious state of your affairs in those days was too much the subject, and I wish the duchess had been the voucher of your amendment. Nothing so much contributed to my ease as the turn of affairs after the queen's death; by which all my hopes being cut off, I could have no ambition left, unless I would have been a greater rascal than happened to suit with my temper. I, therefore, sat down quietly at my morsel, adding only thereto a principle of hatred to all succeeding measures and ministers, by way of sauce to relish my meat: and I confess one point of conduct in my lady duchess's life hath added much poignancy to it. There is a good Irish practical bull towards the end of your letter, where you spend a dozen lines in telling me you must leave off, that you may give my lady duchess room to write, and so you proceed to within two or three lines of the bottom; though I would have remitted you my 200*l.* to have left place for as many more.

To the Duchess.

Madam,

My beginning thus low is meant as a mark of respect, like receiving your grace at the bottom of the stairs. I am glad you know your duty; for it hath been a known and established rule above twenty years in England, that the first advances hath been constantly made me by all ladies who aspired to my acquaintance; and the greater their quality, the greater were their advances. Yet, I

know not by what weakness, I have condescended graciously to dispense with you upon this important article. Though Mr. Gay will tell you that a nameless person sent me eleven messages before I would yield to a visit: I mean a person to whom he is infinitely obliged for being the occasion of the happiness he now enjoys under the protection and favour of my lord duke and your grace. At the same time, I cannot forbear telling you, madam, that you are a little imperious in your manner of making your advances. You say, perhaps you shall not like me; I affirm you are mistaken, which I can plainly demonstrate; for I have certain intelligence that another person dislikes me of late, with whose likings yours have not for some time past gone together. However, if I shall once have the honour to attend your grace, I will, out of fear and prudence, appear as vain as I can, that I may not know your thoughts of me. This is your own direction, but it was needless: for Diogenes himself would be vain to have received the honour of being one moment of his life in the thoughts of your grace.

LETTER CLXIX.

From the same to the same.

Dublin, April 13, 1730-1.

YOUR situation is an odd one; the duchess is your treasurer; and Mr. Pope tells me you are the duke's. And I had gone a good way in some verses on that occasion prescribing lessons to direct your conduct, in a negative way, not to do so and so, &c. like other treasurers; how to deal with servants, tenants, or neighbouring squires, which I take to be courtiers, parliaments, and princes in alliance; and so the parallel goes on, but grows too long to please me: I prove that poets are the fittest persons to be treasurers and managers to great persons, from their virtue and contempt of money, &c.—Pray, why did you not get a new heel to your shoe, unless you would make your court at St. James's by affecting to imitate the Prince of Lilliput?—But the rest of your letter being wholly taken up in a very bad character of the duchess, I shall say no more to you, but apply myself to her grace.

Madam, since Mr. Gay affirms that

you love to have your own way, and since I have the same perfection, I will settle that matter immediately, to prevent those ill consequences he apprehends. Your grace shall have your own way in all places, except your own house and the domains about it. There, and there only, I expect to have mine; so that you have all the world to reign in, bating only two or three hundred acres, and two or three houses in town and country. I will likewise, out of my special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, allow you to be in the right against all human kind, except myself, and to be never in the wrong but when you differ from me. You shall have a greater privilege, in the third article, of speaking your own mind; which I shall graciously allow you now and then to do even to myself, and only rebuke you when it does not please me.

Madam, I am now got as far as your grace's letter, which having not read this fortnight (having been out of town, and not daring to trust myself with the carriage of it), the presumptuous manner in which you begin had slipped out of my memory. But I forgive you to the seventeenth line, where you begin to banish me for ever, by demanding me to answer all the good character some partial friends have given me. Madam, I have lived sixteen years in Ireland, with only an intermission of two summers in England; and consequently am fifty years older than I was at the queen's death, and fifty thousand times duller, and fifty millions times more peevish, perverse, and morose; so that, under these disadvantages, I can only pretend to excel all your other acquaintance about some twenty bars length. Pray, madam, have you a clear voice? and will you let me sit at your left hand, at least within three of you? for of two bad ears, my right is the best. My groom tells me that he likes your park; but your house is too little. Can the parson of the parish play at backgammon and hold his tongue? Is any one of your women a good nurse, if I should fancy myself sick for four-and-twenty hours? How many days will you maintain me and my equipage? When these preliminaries are settled, I must be very poor, very sick, or dead, or to the last degree unfortunate, if I do not attend you at Aimsbury. For I protest that

you are the first lady that ever I desired to see since the first of August 1714, and I have forgot the date when that desire grew strong upon me, but I know I was not then in England, else I would have gone on foot for that happiness as far as to your house in Scotland. But I can soon recollect the time, by asking some ladies here the month, the day, and the hour, when I began to endure their company: which, however, I think, was a sign of my ill judgment, for I do not perceive they mend in any thing but envying or admiring your grace. I dislike nothing in your letter but an affected apology for bad writing, bad spelling, and a bad pen, which you pretend Mr. Gay found fault with; wherein you affront Mr. Gay, you affront me, and you affront yourself. False spelling is only excusable in a chambermaid; for I would not pardon it in any of your waiting-women.—Pray God preserve your grace and family, and give me leave to expect that you will be so just to remember me among those who have the greatest regard for virtue, goodness, prudence, courage, and generosity; after which you must conclude that I am, with the greatest respect and gratitude, madam, your grace's most obedient and most humble servant, &c.

To Mr. Gay.

I have just got yours of February 24, with a postscript by Mr. Pope. I am in great concern for him; I find Mr. Pope dictated to you the first part, and with great difficulty some days after added the rest. I see his weakness by his handwriting. How much does his philosophy exceed mine! I could not bear to see him: I will write to him soon.

LETTER CLXX.

** Mr. Pope to Mr. Swift.*

Dec. 5, 1732.

It is not a time to complain that you have not answered my two letters (in the last of which I was impatient under some fears): it is not now indeed a time to think of myself, when one of the

* "On my dear friend Mr. Gay's death; Received December 15th, but not read till the 20th, by an impulse, foreboding some misfortune." (This note is indorsed on the original letter in Dr. Swift's hand.)

nearest and longest ties I have ever had, is broken all on a sudden, by the unexpected death of poor Mr. Gay. An inflammatory fever hurried him out of this life in three days. He died last night at nine o'clock, not deprived of his senses entirely at last, and possessing them perfectly till within five hours. He asked of you a few hours before, when in acute torment by the inflammation in his bowels and breast. His effects are in the duke of Queensbury's custody. His sisters, we suppose, will be his heirs, who are two widows; as yet it is not known whether or no he left a will.—Good God! how often are we to die before we go quite off this stage? In every friend we lose a part of ourselves, and the best part. God keep those we have left! few are worth praying for, and one's self the most of all.

I shall never see you now, I believe; one of your principal calls to England is at an end. Indeed he was the most amiable by far, his qualities were the gentlest; but I love you as well and as firmly. Would to God the man we have lost had not been so amiable nor so good! but that's a wish for our own sakes, not for his. Sure, if innocence and integrity can deserve happiness, it must be his. Adieu. I can add nothing to what you will feel, and diminish nothing from it. Yet write to me, and soon. Believe no man living loves you better, I believe no man ever did, than

A. POPE.

Dr. Arbuthnot, whose humanity you know, heartily commends himself to you. All possible diligence and affection has been shewn, and continued attendance to this melancholy occasion. Once more adieu, and write to one who is truly disconsolate.

Dear sir,

I am sorry that the renewal of our correspondence should be upon such a melancholy occasion. Poor Mr. Gay died of an inflammation, and I believe, at last, a mortification of the bowels: it was the most precipitate case I ever knew, having cut him off in three days. He was attended by two physicians besides myself. I believed the distemper mortal from the beginning.—I have not had the pleasure of a line from you these two years: I wrote one about your health, to which I

had no answer. I wish you all health and happiness, being with great affection and respect, sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXI.

Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope.

Dublin, 1732-3.

I RECEIVED yours with a few lines from the doctor, and the account of our losing Mr. Gay; upon which event I shall say nothing. I am only concerned that long-living hath not hardened me; for even in this kingdom, and in a few days past, two persons of great merit, whom I loved very well, have died in the prime of their years, but a little above thirty. I would endeavour to comfort myself upon the loss of friends, as I do upon the loss of money; by turning to my account-book, and seeing whether I have enough left for my support; but in the former case I find I have not, any more than in the other; and I know not any man who is in a greater likelihood than myself to die poor and friendless. You are a much greater loser than me by his death, as being a more intimate friend, and often his companion; which latter I could never hope to be, except perhaps once more in my life for a piece of a summer. I hope he hath left you the care of any writings he may have left; and I wish that, with those already extant, they could be all published in a fair edition under your inspection. Your poem on the Use of Riches hath been just printed here; and we have no objection but the obscurity of several passages by our ignorance in facts and persons, which makes us lose abundance of the satire. Had the printer given me notice, I would have honestly printed the names at length, where I happened to know them; and writ explanatory notes, which however would have been but few, for my long absence hath made me ignorant of what passes out of the scene where I am. I never had the least hint from you about this work, any more than of your former upon Taste. We are told here, that you are preparing other pieces of the same bulk to be inscribed to other friends; one (for instance) to my lord Bolingbroke, another to lord Oxford, and so on. Doctor Delany presents you his most humble service: he behaves himself very commendably, converses only with

his former friends, makes no parade, but entertains them constantly at an elegant plentiful table, walks the streets as usual by day-light, does many acts of charity and generosity, cultivates a country-house two miles distant, and is one of those very few within my knowledge, on whom a great access of fortune hath made no manner of change;—and particularly he is often without money, as he was before. We have got my lord Orrery among us, being forced to continue here on the ill condition of his estate by the knavery of an agent; he is a most worthy gentleman, whom, I hope, you will be acquainted with. I am very much obliged by your favour to Mr. P—, which, I desire, may continue no longer than he shall deserve by his modesty: a virtue I never knew him to want, but is hard for young men to keep without abundance of ballast. If you are acquainted with the duchess of Queensbury, I desire you will present her my most humble service; I think she is a greater loser by the death of a friend than either of us. She seems a lady of excellent sense and spirit. I had often postscripts from her in our friend's letters to me, and her part was sometimes longer than his, and they made up great part of the little happiness I could have here. This was the more generous, because I never saw her since she was a girl of five years old; nor did I envy poor Mr. Gay for any thing so much as being a domestic friend to such a lady. I desire you will never fail to send me a particular account of your health. I dare hardly inquire about Mrs. Pope, who, I am told, is but just among the living, and consequently a continual grief to you; she is sensible of your tenderness, which robs her of the only happiness she is capable of enjoying. And yet I pity you more than her; you cannot lengthen her days; and I beg she may not shorten yours.

LETTER CLXXII.

Lady B. — G. — to Dr. Swift.

Feb. 23, 1730-1.

Now were you in vast hopes you should hear no more from me, I being slow in my motions; but do not flatter yourself; you began the correspondence, set my pen a-going, and God knows when it will end; for I had it by inheritance from my father, ever to please myself when I

could; and though I do not just take the turn my mother did, of fasting and praying, yet to be sure that was her pleasure too, or else she would not have been so greedy of it. I do not care to deliver your message this great while to lieutenant Head, he having been dead these two years;—and though he had, as you say, a head, I loved him very well; but, however, from my dame Wadgar's* first impression, I have ever had a natural antipathy to spirits.

I have not acquaintance enough with Mr. Pope, which I am sorry for, and expect you should come to England, in order to improve it. If it was the queen, and not the duke of Grafton, that picked out such a laureat†, she deserves his poetry in her praise.

Your friend Mrs. Barber has been here. I find she has some request, but neither you nor she has yet let it out to me what it is; for certainly you cannot mean that by subscribing to her book; if so, I shall be mighty unhappy to have you call that a favour. For surely there is nothing so easy as what one can do one's self, nor any thing so heavy as what one must ask other people for; though I do not mean by this that I shall ever be unwilling when you require it; yet shall be much happier when it is in my own power to shew how sincerely I am my old friend's most faithful humble servant.

Mrs. Floyd is much yours; but dumber than ever, having a violent cold.

LETTER CLXXIII.

Lady B—— G—— to Dr. Swift.

Nov. 4, 1731.

I BELIEVE in my conscience, that though you had answered mine before, the second was never the less welcome. So much for your topscript, not postscript: and in very sincere earnest I heartily thank you for remembering me so often. Since I came out of the country, my riding days are over; for I never was for your Hyde-park courses, although my courage serves me very well at a hand-gallop in the country for six or seven miles, with one horseman and a ragged lad, a labourer's boy, that is to be clothed when he can run fast enough to keep up with my horse, who has yet

only proved his dexterity by escaping from school. But my courage fails me for riding in town, where I should have the happiness to meet with plenty of your very pretty fellows, that manage their own horses to shew their art: or that think a postillion's cap, with a white frock, the most becoming dress. These and their grooms I am most bitterly afraid of; because, you must know, if my complaisant friend, your Presbyterian housekeeper‡, can remember any thing like such days with me, that is a very good reason for me to remember that time is past; and your toupees would rejoice to see a horse throw an ancient gentlewoman.

I am sorry to hear you are no wiser in Ireland than we English; for our birth-day was as fine as hands could make us; but I question much whether we all paid ready money. I mightily approve of my duchess being dressed in your manufacture§; if your ladies will follow her example in all things, they cannot do amiss. And I dare say you will soon find, that the more you know of them both, the better you will like them; or else Ireland has strangely depraved your taste; and that my own vanity will not let me believe, since you still flatter me.

Why do you tantalize me? Let me see you in England again, if you dare; and choose your residence, summer or winter, St. James's Square, or Drayton. I defy you in all shapes; be it dean of St. Patrick governing England or Ireland, or politician Drapier. But my choice should be the parson in lady Betty's chamber. Make haste; then, if you have a mind to oblige your ever sincere and hearty old friend.

LETTER CLXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Jan. 11, 1731-2.

It is well for Mr. Pope your letter came as it did, or else I had called for my coach, and was going to make a thorough search at his house; for that I was most positively assured that you were there in private, the duke of Dorset can tell you.

‡ Mrs. Brent.

§ The duchess also appeared at the castle of Dublin, wholly clad in the manufactures of Ireland, on his majesty's birth-day in 1753, when the duke was a second time lord-lieutenant.

* The deaf housekeeper at lord Berkeley's.

† Colley Cibber.

Non credo is all the Latin I know, and the most useful phrase on all occasions to me. However, like most other people, I can give it up for what I wish; so for once I believed, or at least went half way in what I hoped was true, and then, for the only time, your letter was unwelcome. You tell me you have a request, which is purely personal to me: *non credo* for that; for I am sure you would not be so disagreeable as not to have made it, when you know it is a pleasure and satisfaction to me to do any thing you desire; by which you may find you are not *sans consequence* to me.

I met with your friend Mr. Pope the other day. He complains of not being well; and indeed looked ill. I fear that neither his wit nor sense do arm him enough against being hurt by malice; and that he is too sensible of what fools say: the run is much against him on the duke of Chandos's* account; but I believe their rage is not kindness to the duke; but they are glad to give it vent with some tolerable pretence. I wish your presence would have such a miraculous effect as your design on Mrs. Biddy's† speech. You know, formerly her tongue was not apt to run much by inclination; but now every winter is kept still *per force*, for she constantly gets a violent cold, that lasts her all winter; but as to that quarrelsome friend of the duke of Dorset, I will let her loose at you, and see which can get the better. Miss Kelly was a very pretty girl when she went from hence; and the beaux shew their good taste by liking her. I hear her father is now kind to her; but if she is not mightily altered, she would give up some of her airs and equipage to live in England.

Since you are so good as to inquire after my health, I ought to inform you I never was better in my life than this winter. I have escaped both headachs and gout; and that yours may not be endangered by reading such a long letter, I will add no more, but bid adieu to my dear dean.

* It was said that Mr. Pope intended the character of Timon, in his epistles on the Use of Riches in Works of Taste, addressed to the earl of Burlington, for the duke of Chandos.

† Mrs. Biddy Floyd.

LETTER CLXXV.

From the same to the same.

Feb. 23, 1731-2.

I LIKE to know my power (if it is so), that I can make you uneasy at my not writing: though I shall not often care to exert it, lest you should grow weary of me and my correspondence; but the slowness of my answers does not come from the emptiness of my heart, but the emptiness of my head; and that you know is nature's fault, not mine. I was not learned enough to know *non credo* has been so long in fashion; but every day convinces me more of the necessity of it, not but that I often wish against myself; as *per* example, I would fain believe you are coming to England, because most of your acquaintance tell me so; and yet turn and wind, and sift your letters to find any thing like it being true; but instead of that, there I find a law-suit, which is a worse tie by the leg than your lameness. And pray what is "this hurt above my heel?" Have you had a fellow-feeling with my lord-lieutenant‡ of the gout, and call it a sprain as he does? who has lain so long and often to disguise it, that I verily think he has not a new story left. Does he do the same in Ireland? for there I hoped he would have given a better example.

I find you are grown a horrid flatterer, or else you could never have thought of any thing so much to my taste as this piece of marble you speak of for my sister Penelope§, which I desire may be at my expense. I cannot be exact, neither as to the time nor year; but she died soon after we came there, and we did not stay quite two years, and were in England some months before king William died. I wish I had my dame Wadgar's, or Mr. Ferrers's memorandum head, that I might know whether it was at the time of gooseberries||.

‡ The duke of Dorset.

§ Lady Penelope Berkeley died in Dublin, whilst her father was in the government, and was interred in St. Andrew's church, under the altar. No monument was erected to her memory till about this time, when Dr. Swift caused a plate of black marble to be fixed in the wall over the altar-piece with this inscription:—

"Underneath lieth the body of the Lady Penelope Berkeley, daughter of the Right Honourable Charles earl of Berkeley. She died September the 3d, 1699."

|| In the petition of Frances Harris to the
Y

Surely your Irish air is very bad for darts; if Mrs. Kelly's are blunted already, make her cross father let her come over, and we will not use her so in England. If my duchess* sees company in a morning, you need not grumble at the hour; it must be purely from great complaisance, for that never was her taste here, though she is as early a riser as the generality of ladies are; and, I believe, there are not many dressing-rooms in London, but mine, where the early idle come.

Adieu abruptly; for I will have no more formal humble servants, with your whole name at the bottom, as if I was asking you your Catechism.

LETTER CLXXVI.

Lady B—— G—— to Dr. Swift.

Drayton, July 19, 1732.

I RELIEVE you will not wonder at my long silence, when I tell you that Mrs. Floyd† came ill here; but that she kept pretty much to herself; and ever since she has been here, till within these two or three days, I have had no hopes of her life. You may easily guess what I must have suffered for a so long-tried, prudent, useful, agreeable companion and friend: and God knows, she is now excessively weak, and mends but slowly: however, I have now great hopes, and I am very good at believing what I heartily wish. As, I dare say, you will be concerned for her, you may want to know her illness; but that is more than I can tell you. She has fancied herself in a consumption a great while; but though she has had the most dreadful cough I ever heard in my life, all the doctors said, it was not that; but none of them did say what it was. The doctor here, who is an extraordinary good one (but lives fourteen long miles off), has lately been left ten thousand pounds, and now hates his business; he says, it is a sharp humour

lords justices, losing her purse, here are these verses:—

“Yes (says she), the steward I remember, when I was at my lady Shrewsbury's, Such a thing as this happened just about the time of gooseberries.

This steward was Mr. Ferrers; and dame Wadgar was the old deaf housekeeper in lord Berkeley's family, when he was one of the lords justices of Ireland.

* The duchess of Dorset.

† Mrs. Biddy Floyd.

that falls upon her nerves, sometimes on her stomach and bowels; and indeed what he has given her, has, to appearance, had much better effect than the millions of things she has been forced to take. After this, you will not expect I should have followed your orders, and ride, for I have scarcely walked; although I dare not be very much in her room, because she constrained herself to hide her illness from me.

The duke and duchess of Dorset have not been here yet; but I am in hopes they will soon. I do not know whether you remember Mrs. Crowther and Mrs. Acourt; they and Mr. Parsode are my company: but as I love my house full, I expect more still. My lady—— talks of making me a short visit. I have been so full of Mrs. Floyd, that I had like to have forgot to tell you, that I am such a dunderhead, that I really do not know what my sister Pen's age was; but I think she could not be above twelve years old. She was the next to me; but whether two or three years younger, I have forgot; and, what is more ridiculous, I do not exactly know my own, for my mother and nurse used to differ upon that notable point; and I am willing to be a young lady still, so will not allow myself to be more than forty-eight next birth-day; but if I make my letter any longer, perhaps you will wish I never had been born. So adieu, dear dean.

LETTER CLXXVII.

From the same to the same.

London, Nov. 7, 1732.

I SHOULD have answered yours sooner, but that I every day expect another from you, with your orders to speak to the duke; which I should with great pleasure have obeyed, as it was to serve a friend of yours. Mrs. Floyd is now, thank God, in as good health as I have seen her these many years, though she has still her winter cough hanging upon her; but that, I fear, I must never expect she should be quite free from at this time of day. All my trouble with her now is, to make her drink wine enough, according to the doctor's order, which is not above three or four glasses, such as are commonly filled at sober houses; and that she makes so great a rout with, so

many faces, that there is nobody that did not know her perfectly well, but would extremely suspect she drinks draams in private.

I am sorry to find our tastes so different in the same person : and as every body has a natural partiality to their own opinion, so it is surprising to me to find lady S—— dwindle in yours, who rises infinitely in mine the more and the longer I know her. But you say, you will say no more of courts for fear of growing angry ; and indeed I think you are so already, since you level all without knowing them, and seem to think that none who belong to a court can act right. I am sure this cannot be really and truly your sense, because it is unjust ; and if it is, I shall suspect there is something of your old maxim in it (which I ever admired and found true), that you must have offended them, because you do not forgive. I have been about a fortnight from Knowle*, and shall next Thursday go there again for about three weeks, where I shall be ready and willing to receive your commands ; who am most faithfully and sincerely yours.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Feb. 8, 1732-3.

I RECEIVED yours of the 8th of January but last week ; so find it has lain long on the road after the date. It was brought me whilst at dinner, that very lady sitting close to me, whom you seem to think such an absolute courtier†. She knew your hand, and inquired much after you, as she always does ; but I, finding her name frequently mentioned, not with that kindness I am sure she deserves, put it into my pocket with silence and surprise. Indeed, were it in people's power that live in a court with the appearance of favour, to do all they desire for their friends, they might deserve their anger, and be blamed, when it does not happen right to their minds ; but that, I believe, never was the case of any one ; and in this particular of Mr. Gay, thus far I know, and so far I will answer for, that she was under very great concern that nothing better could be got

for him ; the friendship upon all other occasions in her own power, that she shewed him, did not look like a double dealer.

As to that part concerning yourself and her, I suppose it is my want of comprehension, that I cannot find out why she was to blame to give you advice when you asked it, that had all the appearance of sincerity, good-nature, and right judgment. And if, after that, the court did not do what you wanted, and she both believed and wished they would, was it her fault ? At least, I cannot find it out, that you have hitherto proved it upon her. And though you say, you lamented the hour you had seen her, yet I cannot tell how to suppose that your good sense and justice can impute any thing to her, because it did not fall out just as she endeavoured and hoped it would.

As to your creed in politics, I will heartily and sincerely subscribe to it— That I detest avarice in courts ; corruption in ministers ; schisms in religion ; illiterate fawning betrayers of the church in mitres. But at the same time, I prodigiously want an infallible judge, to determine when it is really so ; for as I have lived longer in the world, and seen many changes, I know those out of power and place always see the faults of those in with dreadful large spectacles ; and, I dare say, you know many instances of it in lord Oxford's time. But the strongest in my memory is, sir R—— W——, being first pulled to pieces in the year 1720, because the South Sea did not rise high enough ; and since that, he has been to the full as well banged about, because it did rise too high. So experience has taught me how wrong, unjust, and senseless party factions are ; therefore, I am determined never wholly to believe any side or party against the other ; and to shew that I will not, as my friends are in and out of all sides, so my house receives them all together ; and those people meet here, that have, and would fight in any other place. Those of them that have great and good qualities and virtues, I love and admire ; in which number is lady —— ; and I do like and love her, because I believe, and, as far as I am capable of judging, know her to be a wise, discreet, honest, and sincere courtier, who will promise no farther than she can perform, and will always

* In Kent, the seat of the duke of Dorset.

† The countess of S——.

perform what she does promise : so now you have my creed as to her.

I thought I had told you in my last, at least I am sure I designed it, that I desire you would do just as you like about the monument ; and then it will be most undoubtedly approved by your most sincere and faithful servant.

LETTER CLXXIX.

The Duchess of ——— to Dr. Swift.

April 12, 1733.

Dear sir,

I RECEIVED yours of the 23d of March. Perpetual pains in my head have hindered me from writing till this moment ; so you see you are not the only person that way tormented. I dare believe there are as many bad heads in England as in Ireland ; I am sure none worse than my own ; that I am made for pain and pain for me ; for of late we have been inseparable. It is a most dispiriting distemper, and brings on pain of mind ; whether real or imaginary, it is all one.

Whilst I had that very sincere good friend, I could sometimes lay open all my rambling thoughts, and he and I would often view and dissect them ; but now they come and go, and I seldom find out whether they be right or wrong, or if there be any thing in them. Poor man ! he was most truly every thing you could say of him. I have lost, in him, the usefullest limb of my mind. This is an odd expression ; but I cannot explain my notion otherwise.

I deny that I am touchy ; yet am going to seem so again, by assuring you my letters are never false copies of my mind. They are often, I believe, imperfections of an imperfect mind ; which, however, to do it justice, often directs it better than I act. Though I will not take upon me to declare my way of thinking to be eternally the same ; yet whatever I write is at that instant true. I would rather tell a lie than write it down ; for words are wind ('tis said) ; but the making a memorandum of one's own false heart would stare one in the face immediately, and should put one out of countenance. Now, as a proof of my unsettled way of thinking, and of my sincerity, I shall tell you that I am not so much in the wrong as you observed I

was in my last ; for my regard to you is lessened extremely, since I observe you are just like most other people, *viz.* obliged at trifles, and obliged at nothings ; for what else are bare words ? Therefore pray never believe I wish to serve you till you have tried me ; till then protestations are bribes, by which I may only mean to gain the friendship of a valuable man, and therefore ought to be suspected. I seldom make any for that reason ; so that if I have the peculiar happiness to have any wise good people my flatterers, God knows how I came by it ; but sure nothing can equal such glory, except that of having the silly and bad people my enemies.

Here I think we agree. You declare that no such can depress your spirits ; and if our constitutions are alike, I will not only preach up good spirits, but prescribe the materials that have ever agreed with me. If any body has done me an injury, they have hurt themselves more than me. If they give me an ill name (unless they have my help) I shall not deserve it. If fools shun my company, it is because I am not like them ; if people make me angry, they only raise my spirits ; and if they wish me ill, I will be well and handsome, wise and happy, and every thing, except a day younger than I am, and that's a fancy I never yet saw becoming to a man or woman, so it cannot excite envy. Here I have betrayed to you the devilishness of my temper ; but I declare to you, nothing ever enlivened me half so much as unjust ill usage, either directed to myself or my friends. The very reverse happens to me when I am too well spoken of ; for I am sorry to find I do not deserve it all. This humbleth me as much too much as the other exalts ; so I hope you will not be too civil, since I have declared the consequence.

I am in great hopes you will make us a visit this summer ; for though I have a sensible satisfaction by conversing with you in this way, yet I love mightily to look in the person's face I am speaking to. By that, one soon learns to stop when it is wished, or to mend what is said amiss.

Your stewards will take great care of your money ; but you must first direct us to your friend Mr. Lancelot, and order him to give up Mr. Gay's note, on his sister's paying the money to his grace,

who will give him his note for the money, or send it to you, just as you order. And as to what interest is due, I suppose you have kept some account.

By this time you must be too much tired to bear reading one word more; therefore I will make no excuses. Pray employ me, for I want to be certain whether I know my own mind or not; for something or other often tells me, that I should be very happy to be of any use to you. Whether it be true or false, neither you nor I can be positive, till an opportunity shews: but I do really think that I am, dear sir, most sincerely yours, &c.

LETTER CLXXX.

Lady B—— G—— to Dr. Swift.

Knowle, July 9, 1733.

Now, says parson Swift*, "What the devil makes this woman write to me with this filthy white ink? I cannot read a word of it, without more trouble than her silly scribble is worth." Why, say I again, Ay, it is the women are always accused of having bad writing implements; but to my comfort he it spoke, this is his grace my lord lieutenant's† ink. My bureau at London is so well furnished, that his grace and his secretary make so much use of it, that they are often obliged to give me half a crown, that I may not run out my estate in paper. It is very happy when a go-between pleases both sides, and I am very well pleased with my office; for his grace is delighted that it was in his power to oblige you. So *treve de compliment*. Since I have declared my passion against a bishop and a parson, it is but fair I should tell you the story, whether you care to hear it or not; but if you do not, I give you leave not to mind it, for, now it is over, I am calm again.

As to the‡ bishop, I know neither his principles nor his parts, but his diocese is Peterborough, and having a small park in Northamptonshire, which I had a mind to increase by a small addition, to make my house stand in the middle of it. Three shillings and sixpence worth of land, at the largest computation, be-

* The name she called the dean by, in the stanza which she inserted in his ballad on *The Game of Traffic*.

† Duke of Dorset. ‡ Dr. Robert Clavering.

longs to the church; for which my old parson (who flatters me black and blue, when he comes from a Sunday dinner, and says he loves me better than any body in the world) has made me give him up in lieu of that land, a house and ground that lets for 40s. a year, and is hardly content with that, but reckons it a vast favour. And the bishop has put me to ten times more charge than it is worth, by sending commissioners to view it, and making me give petitions, and dancing me through his court; besides a great dinner to his nasty people. Now, am I not in the right to be angry? But perhaps you will say, if I will have my fancies, I must pay for them; so I will say no more about it. I hear poor Mrs. Kelly is not near so well as she says; and a gentleman that came from Bristol, says she looks dreadfully, and fears it is almost over with her, and that no mortal could know her: so ends youth and beauty! That is such a moral reflection, that, lest it should make you melancholy, I will tell you something to please you. Your old friend Mrs. Floyd is perfectly recovered. I think I have not seen her so well this great while; but winter is always her bane, so I shall live in dread of that.

In your next I desire to know what I am in your debt for my sister's monument. Adieu, my dear, good, old beloved friend.

LETTER CLXXXI.

From the same to the same.

London, July 12, 1735.

I HAVE not answered yours of the 15th of June so soon as I should; but the duke of Dorset had answered all yours ere your letter came to my hands. So I hope all causes of complaint are at an end, and that he has shewed himself, as he is, much your friend and humble servant, though he wears a garter, and had his original from Normandy, if heralds do not lie, or his granums did not play false; and whilst he is lord-lieutenant (which I heartily wish may not be much longer) I dare say he will be very glad of any opportunity to do what you recommend to him. Thus far will I answer for his grace, though he is now in the country, and cannot subscribe to it himself.

Now to quite another affair. The countess of Suffolk (whom you know I have long had a great esteem and value for) has been so good and gracious as to take my brother George Berkeley for better for worse, though I hope in God the last will not happen, because I think he is an honest good-natured man. The town is surprised; and the town talks, as the town loves to do, upon these ordinary extraordinary occasions. She is indeed four or five years older than he, and no more; but for all that, he hath appeared to all the world, as well as me, to have long had (that is, ever since she hath been a widow, so pray do not mistake me) a most violent passion for her, as well as esteem and value for her numberless good qualities. These things well considered, I do not think they have above ten to one against their being very happy; and if they should not be so, I shall heartily wish him hanged, because I am sure it will be wholly his fault. As to her fortune, though she has been twenty years a court favourite, yet I doubt she has been too disinterested to enlarge it, as others would have done: and sir Robert*, her greatest enemy, does not tax her with getting quite forty thousand pounds. I wish, but fear it is not near that sum, but what she has she never told me, nor have I ever asked; but whatever it is, they must live accordingly; and he had of his own wherewithal to live by himself easily and genteelly.

In this hurry of matrimony, I had like to forget to answer that part of your letter where you say you never heard of our being in print together. I believe it was about twenty years ago Mr. Curll set forth *Letters, amorous, satirical, and gallant, between Dr. Swift, lady Mary Chamber, lady Betty Germain, and Mrs. Anne Long*, and several other persons. I am afraid some of my people used them according to their deserts; for they have not appeared above-ground this great while: and now to the addition of writing the brave large hand you make me do for you, I have bruised my fingers prodigiously; and can say no more but Adieu.

* Walpole, afterwards lord Orford.

LETTER CLXXXII.

Dr. Swift to the Duke of Dorset.

Dec 30, 1735.

My lord,

Your grace fairly owes me one hundred and ten pounds a year in the church, which I thus prove: I desired you would bestow a preferment of one hundred and fifty pounds a year to a certain clergyman. Your answer was, that I asked modestly: that you would not promise, but you would grant my request. However, for want of good intelligence in being (after a cant word used here) an expert king-fisher, that clergyman took up with forty pounds a year; and I shall never trouble your grace any more in his behalf. Now, by plain arithmetic it follows, that one hundred and ten pounds remain; and this arrear I have assigned to Mr. John Jackson, who is vicar of Santry, and hath a small estate, with two sons, and as many daughters, all grown up. He hath lain some years as a weight upon me, which I voluntarily took up, on account of his virtue, piety, and good sense, and modesty almost to a fault. Your grace is now disposing of the *debris*† of two bishoprics; among which is the deanery of Ferns, worth between eighty and one hundred pounds a year, which will make this gentleman easier; who, besides his other good qualities, is as loyal as you could wish.

I cannot but think that your grace, to whom God hath given every amiable quality, is bound, when you have satisfied all the expectations of those who have power in your club‡, to do something at the request of others, who love you on your own account, without expecting any thing for themselves. I have ventured once or twice to drop hints in favour of some very deserving gentlemen, who I was assured had been recommended to you by persons of weight; but I easily found by your general answers, that although I have been an old courtier, you knew how to silence me, by diverting the discourse, which made me reflect that courtiers resemble gamesters, the latter finding new arts unknown to the older; and one of them assured

† The shattered remains.

‡ The parliament of Ireland.

me, that he has lost fourteen thousand pounds since he left off play, merely by dabbling with those who had contrived new refinements.

My lord, I will, as a divine, quote Scripture:—Although the children's meat should not be given to dogs, yet the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the children's table. This is the second request I have ever made your grace directly. Mr. Jackson is condemned to live on his own small estate, part whereof is in his parish, about four miles from hence, where he hath built a family-house, more expensive than he intended, He is a clergyman of long standing, and of a most unblemished character; but the misfortune is, he hath not one enemy, to whom I might appeal for the truth of what I say.

Pray, my lord, be not alarmed at the word deanery, nor imagine it a dignity like those we have in England; for ex-

cept three or four, the rest have little power, rather none as a dean and chapter, and seldom any land at all. It is usually a living consisting of one or more parishes, some very poor, and others better endowed; but all in tythes.

Mr. Jackson cannot leave his present situation; and only desires some very moderate addition. My lord, I do not deceive your grace, when I say, you will oblige great numbers, even of those who are most at your devotion, by conferring this favour, or any other that will answer the same end. *Multa—veniet manus auxilio quæ—Sit mihi (nam multo plures sumus) ac veluti te—Judæi cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.*

I would have waited on your grace, and taken the privilege of my usual thirteen minutes, if I had not been prevented by my old disorder in my head; for which I have been forced to confine myself to the precepts of my physicians.

BOOK THE THIRD.

LETTERS OF THE LAST CENTURY, AND OF LATE DATE.

SECTION II.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Dr. Swift to Miss Jane Waryng.*

Dublin, May 4, 1700.

Madam,

I AM extremely concerned at the account you give of your health; for my uncle told me he found you in appearance better than you had been in some years; and I was in hopes you had still continued so. God forbid I should ever be the occasion of creating more troubles to you, as you seem to intimate! The letter you desired me to answer, I have frequently read, and thought I had replied to every part of it that required: however, since you are pleased to repeat those particulars wherein you desire satisfaction, I shall endeavour to give it you as well as I am able. You would know what gave my temper that sudden turn, as to alter the style of my letters since I last came over. If there has been that alteration you observe, I have told you the cause abundance of times. I had used a thousand endeavours and arguments to get you from the company and place you are in; both on the account of your health and humour, which I thought were like to suffer very much in

such an air, and before such examples. All I had in answer from you was nothing but a great deal of arguing, and sometimes in a style so very imperious as I thought might have been spared, when I reflected how much you had been in the wrong. The other thing you would know is, whether this change of style be owing to the thoughts of a new mistress. I declare, upon the word of a Christian and a gentleman, it is not; neither had I ever thoughts of being married to any other person but yourself. I had ever an opinion that you had a great sweetness of nature and humour; and whatever appeared to the contrary, I looked upon it only as a thing put on as necessary before a lover: but I have since observed in abundance of your letters such marks of a severe indifference, that I began to think it was hardly possible for one of my few good qualities to please you. I never knew any so hard to be worked upon, even in matters where the interest and concern are entirely your own: all which, I say, passed easily while we were in the state of formalities and ceremony: but since that, there is no other way of accounting for this untractable behaviour in you, but by imputing it to a want of common esteem and friendship for me.

When I desired an account of your fortune, I had no such design as you pretend to imagine. I have told you many a time, that in England it was in the power of any young fellow of com-

* This letter, Mr. Faulkner says, was written "to a lady of family in the north of Ireland;" and he adds, that it was "supposed to be previous to Dr. Swift's acquaintance with Stella." It was written not long before the time of Stella's fixing her residence in Ireland.

mon sense to get a larger fortune than ever you pretended to. I asked, in order to consider whether it were sufficient, with the help of my poor income, to make one of your humour easy in a married state. I think it comes to almost a hundred pounds a year; and I think at the same time, that no young woman in the world of the same income would dwindle away her health and life in such a sink, and among such family conversation: neither have all your letters been once able to persuade that you have the least value for me, because you so little regarded what I so often said upon that matter. The dismal account you say I have given you of my livings*, I can assure you to be a true one; and, since it is a dismal one even in your own opinion, you can best draw consequences from it. The place where Dr. Bolton† lived is upon a living which he keeps with the deanery; but the place of residence for that they have given me, is within a mile of a town called Trim, twenty miles from hence; and there is no other way, but to hire a house at Trim, or build one on the spot: the first is hardly to be done, and the other I am too poor to perform at present. For coming down to Belfast, it is what I cannot yet think of, my attendance is so close, and so much required of me; but our government sits very loose, and I believe will change in a few months; whether our part‡ will partake in the change, I know not, though I am very apt to believe it; and then I shall be at leisure for a short journey. But I hope your other friends, more powerful than I, will before that time persuade you from the

* Those of Laracor and Rathbeggin.

† This gentleman, as well as Dr. Swift, was chaplain to lord Berkeley when one of the lords justices in Ireland; and was promoted to the deanery of Derry, which had been previously promised to Dr. Swift: but Mr. Bush, the principal secretary, for weighty reasons best known to himself, laid Dr. Swift aside, unless he would pay him a large sum; which the Doctor refused with the utmost contempt and scorn. Dr. Bolton, who was also minister of St. Werberg's, Dublin, was advanced to the bishopric of Clonfert, Sept. 12, 1722: translated to Elphin, April 16, 1724; to Cashel, Jan. 6, 1729; and died in 1744. He was one of the most eloquent speakers of his time, and was particularly skilled in ecclesiastical history.

‡ Meaning lord Berkeley, who was then one of the three lords justices.—The earl of Rochester was appointed lord-lieutenant in September following.

place where you are. I desire my service to your mother, in return for her remembrance: but for any other dealings that way, I entreat your pardon: and I think I have more cause to resent your desires of me in that cause, than you have to be angry with my refusals. If you like such company and conduct, much good do you with them! my education has been otherwise. My uncle Adam§ asked me one day in private, as by direction, what my designs were in relation to you, because it might be a hindrance to you if I did not proceed. The answer I gave him (which I suppose he has sent you) was to this effect:—"That I hoped I was no hindrance to you; because the reason you urged against an union with me was drawn from your indisposition, which still continued: That you also thought my fortune not sufficient, which is neither at present in a condition to offer you: That, if your health and my fortune were as they ought, I would prefer you above all your sex; but that, in the present condition of both, I thought it was against your opinion, and would certainly make you unhappy: That had you any other offers, which your friends or yourself thought more to your advantage, I should think I were very unjust to be an obstacle in your way." Now for what concerns my fortune, you have answered it. I desire, therefore, you will let me know if your health be otherwise than it was when you told me the doctors advised you against marriage, as what would certainly hazard your life. Are they or you grown of another opinion in this particular? Are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs, with an income of less (perhaps) than three hundred pounds a year? Have you such an inclination to my person and humour, as to comply with my desires and way of living, and endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? Will you be ready to engage in those methods I shall direct for the improvement of your mind, so as to make us entertaining company for each other, without being miserable when we are neither visiting nor visited? Can you bend your love, esteem, and indifference to others the same way as I do mine? Shall I have so much power in

§ Whose daughter, Anne, married a clergyman of the name of Perry.

your heart, or you so much government of your passions, as to grow in good humour upon my approach, though provoked by a —? Have you so much good nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any rugged humour occasioned by the cross accidents of life? Shall the place wherever your husband is thrown be more welcome than courts and cities without him? In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men who, like me, are deep read in the world; and to a person thus made, I shall be proud in giving all due returns towards making her happy. These are the questions I have always resolved to propose to her with whom I meant to pass my life; and whenever you can heartily answer them in the affirmative, I shall be blessed to have you in my arms, without regarding whether your person be beautiful, or your fortune large. Cleanliness in the first, and competency in the other, is all I look for. I desire indeed a plentiful revenue, but would rather it should be of my own; though I should bear from a wife to be reproached for the greatest.

I have said all I can possibly say in answer to any part of your letter, and in telling you my clear opinion as to matters between us. I singled you out at first from the rest of women; and I expect not to be used like a common lover. When you think fit to send me an answer to this without —, I shall then approve myself, by all means you shall command, madam, your most faithful humble servant.

LETTER II.

Dr. Tillotson to the Earl of Mulgrave.

Oct. 23, 1679.

My lord,

It was a great satisfaction to me to be anywise instrumental in the gaining of your lordship to our religion, which I am most firmly persuaded to be the truth; but yet I am, and always was, more concerned that your lordship should continue a virtuous and good man, than become a protestant; being assured that the ignorance and errors of men's understandings will find a much easier forgiveness with God than the faults of their wills. I remember your lordship

once told me, you would endeavour to justify the sincerity of your change, by a conscientious regard to all other parts and actions of your life; I am sure you cannot more effectually condemn your own act, than by being a worse man, after your profession to have embraced a better religion. I will certainly be one of the last to believe any thing of your lordship that is not good; but I always feared I should be among the first that should hear of it. Before the time I last waited on your lordship, I had heard something which afflicted me very sensibly; but I hoped it was not true, and was therefore loth then to trouble your lordship about it; but having heard the same since from those whom I believe to bear no ill-will to your lordship, I now think it my duty to acquaint you with it. To speak plainly, I have been told that your lordship is of late fallen into a conversation dangerous both to your reputation and virtue, two of the tenderest and dearest things in the world. I believe your lordship to have great command and conduct of yourself, but am very sensible of human frailty, and of the dangerous temptations to which youth is exposed in this dissolute age; and therefore I earnestly beseech your lordship to consider, besides the high provocation of Almighty God, and the hazard of your soul whenever you engage in a bad course, what a blemish you will bring upon a fair and unspotted reputation, what uneasiness and trouble you will create to yourself from the severe reflections of a guilty conscience, and how great a violence you will offer to the good principles of your nature and education, and to a mind the best made for virtuous and worthy things. And do not imagine you can stop when you please; experience shews the contrary, and that nothing is more vain than for men to think to set bounds to themselves in any thing that is bad: I hope in God that no temptation hath yet prevailed upon your lordship so far as to be guilty of any lewd act: if it have, as you love your soul, let it not proceed to a habit. The retreat is yet easy and open, but will every day become more difficult and obstructed; God is so merciful, that upon our repentance and resolution of amendment, he is not only ready to forgive what is past, but to assist us by his grace to do better for the

future; but I need not enforce these considerations upon a mind so capable and easy to receive good counsel; I shall only desire your lordship to think again and again how great a point of wisdom it is in all our actions to consult the peace of our own minds, and to have no quarrel with the constant and inseparable companion of our lives. If others displease us, we may quit their company: but he that is displeased at himself is unavoidably unhappy, because he hath no way to get rid of himself.

My lord, for God's sake, and your own, think of being happy, and resolve by all means to save yourself from this untoward generation; and determine rather upon a speedy change of your condition than to gratify the inclinations of youth in any way but what is lawful and honourable; and let me have the contentment to be assured from your lordship, either that there hath been no ground for this report, or that there shall be none for the future, which will be the welcomest news to me in the world. I have now only to beg of your lordship to believe, that I have not done this to satisfy the formality of my profession; but that it proceeds from the truest affection and good-will that one man can possibly bear to another.

I pray God every day for your lordship, with the same constancy and fervour of devotion as for myself; and do now more earnestly beg of him, that this counsel may be acceptable and effectual. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

Earl of Mulgrave to Dr. Tillotson.

Whitehall, March 27, 1689.

Sir,

NOTHING in this world is, nor ought to be, so dear to any man as his reputation; and consequently the defence of it is the greatest obligation that one man can lay on another: there are also some circumstances, that render this obligation yet more acceptable and valuable; as when it is conferred generously, without any self-interest, or the least desire of invitation from the person so defended. All this happens to be my case at this time; and therefore I hope you will not be surprised to find I am not the most ungrateful and insensible

man living; which certainly I should be, if I did not acknowledge all your industrious concern for me about the business of the ecclesiastical commission, which now makes so much noise in the world. You have, as I am told, so cordially pleaded my cause, that it is almost become your own; and therefore, as unwilling as I am to speak of myself, especially in a business which I cannot wholly excuse, yet I think myself now a little obliged to shew my part in this matter, though imprudent enough, yet is not altogether unworthy of so just and so considerable an advocate.

The less a man says of himself, the better; and it is so well known already how I was kept out of all secret councils, that I need not justify myself, nor trouble you as to those matters: only I appeal to the unquestionable testimony of the Spanish ambassador, if I did not zealously and constantly take all occasions to oppose the French interest; because I knew it directly opposite both to the king and kingdom's good, which are indeed things inseparable, and ought to be so accounted, as a fundamental maxim in all councils of princes.

This, I hope, will prepare the way a little for what I have to say concerning my being one of the ecclesiastical commissioners; of which error I am now as sensible as I was at first ignorant, being so unhappily conversant in the midst of a perpetual court flattery, as never to have heard the least word of any illegality in that commission before I was unfortunately engaged in it.

For though my lord of Canterbury had very prudently refused to be of it, yet it was talked at court, it proceeded only from his unwillingness to act at that time, and not from any illegality he suspected in the commission; having excused himself from it the most respectful way, by the infirmities he lay under. Being thus ignorant of the laws, and in such a station at court, I need not desire a man of your judgment and candour to consider the hardness of my case, when I was commanded to serve in a commission with a lord chancellor, a lord chief justice, and two bishops, who had all of them already acted some time there, without shewing the least diffidence of their power, or any hesitation in the execution of it; and perhaps a man of more

discretion than I can pretend to, might have been easily persuaded to act in such a conjunction, and to think he might do it safely, both in law and conscience; but I need not say much to shew my desire to have avoided, if possible, a troublesome employment, that had not the least temptation of honour or profit to recommend it; and which therefore I continued in upon no account in the world but to serve both king and clergy with the little ability I had, in moderating those councils, which I thought might grow higher if I left my place to be filled by any of those who waited for it greedily, in order to their ill designs.

And I may expect the more credit in this, when it is considered that the two important affairs which passed in that ecclesiastical court, being the bishop of London's suspension, and the incapacitating the members of Magdalen college: the first was done some months before I was a commissioner; and I opposed the last, both in voting and speaking, and with all the interest I was able to make use of, which indeed was but little after that opposition; in which, being outvoted, I seldom came, and never acted in that court after, except to restore the bishop of London, though sent for continually, by reason of my lodging so near it.

And since I have been forced to mention my good-will at least, if not my service, to such learned men of the clergy, who I thought deserved it, it may be allowed me to give this one instance more of it; that although in preferring men to all other places of the household, I ever used to ask permission first, and accordingly was often refused, for the sake of Roman Catholics and others, who were recommended by persons more in favour than myself; yet I was so careful of keeping that considerable part of the family unmingled with mean or unworthy chaplains, whom others, I feared, would have imposed on his majesty, that I constantly filled up those vacancies without giving him the least notice or trouble about it, and supplied them with the ablest approved divines I could possibly find, most commonly recommended to me by the bishops who were not of the court: which I conceived the most proper course, in a matter concerning clergymen, with a king of a different per-

suasion from theirs, and intended for his real service, believing it had been better for him, as well as the kingdom, if the greater ecclesiastical dignities had been disposed of by others with as much caution.

And thus, sir, I have endeavoured to confirm you in your favourable opinion of me, which must be acknowledged by every body an approbation of such weight, that as I hope it may be an example of authority to many, so it is sufficient of itself to balance the censoriousness of others. I am, &c.

LETTER IV.

Dr. Lewis Atterbury to Bishop Atterbury.*

April ..., 1720.

Dear brother,

It is reported that the archdeacon [of Rochester] is dead; and I have sent my servant to inform me, whether it is so or not. I have since considered all that you said to me yesterday; and both from reason and matter of fact, still am of opinion, that there can be no just matter of exception taken.

I shall only lay down two or three instances which lie uppermost in my thoughts. Your lordship very well knows, that Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury†, had a brother for his archdeacon; and that sir Thomas More's father was a pious judge when he was lord chancellor‡: and thus, in the sacred history, did God himself appoint, that the safety and advancement of the patriarchs should be procured by their younger brother; and that they, with their father, should live under the protection and government of Joseph. I instance in those obvious examples, only

* Dr. Lewis Atterbury, elder brother of the bishop, was born at Caldecot, in the parish of Newport Pagnel, in Buckinghamshire, the second of May, 1656. He was educated at Westminster school, under the celebrated Dr. Busby, between whom and our divine's father, Dr. Lewis Atterbury, there was a friendship and intimacy.

† From 1070 till 1093. Anshibillus was made archdeacon in 1075.

‡ On the disgrace of Wolsey, in 1530, the great seal was entrusted to sir Thomas More, who was the first layman that enjoyed that honour, which he resigned in 1533, and was executed in 1535. His father, sir John, outlived him thirty-five years.

to let your lordship see that I have canvassed these matters in my own thoughts; and I see no reason but to depend on your kind intentions, intimated in your former letter, to your most affectionate brother, &c.

LETTER V.

Bishop Atterbury to his brother.

Bromley, Welnesday, April ... 1720.

Dear brother,

YOUR letter directed to Westminster found me here this morning. I hope to be at Westminster to-morrow. In the mean time you may assure yourself of any thing that is in my disposal. At present the gentleman* you mention is well, and likely to continue so. His distemper is the same as mine, though he has it in a worse degree. However, he is sixteen or seventeen years younger than I am, and may probably therefore outlive me. When he was in danger of late, the first person I thought of was you. But there are objections against that, in point of decency, which, I own, stick with me; and which, after I have laid them before you, you shall allow, or over-rule, as you think fit. It had been a much properer post for my nephew†, if God had pleased to spare his life. You need not mention any thing of this kind to me; for you may depend upon it, you are never out of the thoughts of your ever affectionate brother.

LETTER VI.

From the same to the same.

Deanery, Tuesday night.

Dear brother,

I HOPE you have considered the matter of the archdeaconry, and do at last see it in the same light that I do. I protest to you, I cannot help thinking it the

* Thomas Sprat, M. A. (son to the famous bishop of that name). He was archdeacon of Rochester; and a prebendary of Westminster, Winchester, and Rochester. He died May 10, 1720.

† Dr. Lewis Atterbury had three sons; of whom the first and second died in their infancy. The third, named Bedingfield Atterbury, was born Jan. 8, 1693, and died of the small-pox, Dec. 27, 1718.

most unseemly indecent thing in the world; and I am very sure the generality of those, whose opinions I regard, will be of that opinion. I was so far from apprehending that such a station, under me, would be in the least welcome to you, that I discoursed of it, and proposed it to another person‡ some time ago, and am entered very far into engagements on that head; and had you not written to me, I do frankly own, that I should never have spoken a word to you about it. Believe me, when I tell you that this is a plain state of the fact; and should you at last come to be of my opinion, I dare say you will not, at long run, think yourself mistaken. I am sure I shall not be at ease till you are in some good dignity in the church; such as you, and I, and all the world, shall agree, is every way proper for you. I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same

May 20, 1720.

Dear brother,

THE person, to whom I told you I had gone very far towards engaging myself for the archdeaconry, was Dr. Brydges§, the duke of Chandos's brother; and him I am this day going to collate to it. I hope you are convinced by what I have said and written, that nothing could have been more improper than the placing you in that post, immediately under myself. Could I have been easy under that thought, you may be sure, no man living should have had the preference to you. I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Bishop Atterbury to his Son at Oxford.

[Of uncertain date.]

Dear Obby,

I THANK you for your letter, because there are manifest signs in it of your endeavouring to excel yourself, and by consequence to please me. You have succeeded in both respects, and will al-

‡ Dr. Brydges. See the next letter.

§ Dr. Brydges was an old and intimate acquaintance of the bishop. He died May 9, 1728.

ways succeed, if you think it worth your while to consider what you write, and to whom; and let nothing, though of a trifling nature, pass through your pen negligently: get but the way of writing correctly and justly, time and use will teach you to write readily afterwards; not but that too much care may give a stiffness to your style, which ought, in letters, by all means to be avoided. The turn of them should be always natural and easy, for they are an image of private and familiar conversation. I mention this with respect to the four or five first lines of yours, which have an air of poetry, and do naturally resolve themselves in blank verse. I send you the letter again, that you yourself may now make the same observation; but you took the hint of the thought from a poem; and it is no wonder therefore if you have heightened your phrase a little when you were expressing it. The rest is as it should be; and particularly there is an air of duty and sincerity in it, that, if it comes from the heart, is the most acceptable present you can make me: with these good qualities an incorrect letter would please me; and without them, the finest thoughts and language would make no lasting impression upon me. The Great Being says (you know), "My son, give me thy heart"—implying, that without it all other gifts signify nothing: let me conjure you, therefore, never to say any thing, either in a letter or common conversation, that you do not think; but always let your mind and your words go together, even on the most slight and trivial occasions. Shelter not the least degree of insincerity under the notion of a compliment, which (as far as it deserves to be practised by a man of probity) is only the most civil and obliging way of saying what you really mean; and whoever employs it otherwise throws away truth for good-breeding; I need not tell you how little his character gets by such an exchange. I say not this as if I suspected that in any part of your letter you intended only to write what was proper, without any regard to what was true; for I am resolved to believe that you were in good earnest from the beginning to the end of it, as much even as I am when I tell you that I am your loving father.

LETTER IX.

Bishop Atterbury to Lord Townsend.

The Tower, April 10, 1723.

My lord,

I AM thankful for the favour of seeing my daughter any way; but was in hopes the restraint of an officer's presence in respect of her might have been judged needless, at a time when her husband is allowed to be as often and as long with me as he pleases without witness, especially since we have been parted now for near eight months*, and must soon, if the bill takes place†, be parted for ever.

My lord, I have many things to say to her, in relation to herself, her brother, and my little family affairs, which cannot with ease, to her or me, be said in presence of others; and I dare say your lordship does not apprehend that the subject of our conversation will be of such a nature as to deserve to be in any degree watched or restrained. She has been the comfort of my life; and I shall leave her with more regret than I leave my preferments (though when I am stripped of them I shall have nothing to support me). Nor is there scarce any loss, besides that of my country, which will touch me so nearly.

Your lordship, who is known to be a tender father‡, will feel what I say; and consider how far it is fit to indulge me in so innocent a request. It is a little thing I ask; but nothing is little that can give any relief to a man in my sad circumstances, which deserve your lordship's compassion, and I hope will obtain it.

I am, with all respect, your lordship's most humble and most obedient servant.

LETTER X.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mrs. Morice.

Montpelier, Sept. 3, 1729.

My dear heart,

I HAVE so much to say to you, that I can hardly say any thing to you till I see you. My heart is full; but it is in

* The bishop was apprehended Aug. 24, 1722.

† It passed the house of commons on the 9th of April, and received the royal assent May 27.

‡ This nobleman retired from public business in 1730, and died June, 1738.

vain to begin upon paper what I can never end. I have a thousand desires to see you, which are checked by a thousand fears, lest any ill accident should happen to you in the journey. God preserve you in every step of it, and send you safe hither! And I will endeavour, by his blessing and assistance, to send you well back again, and to accompany you in the journey, as far as the law of England will suffer me. I stay here only to receive and take care of you (for no other view should have hindered my coming into the north of France this autumn); and I live only to help towards lengthening your life, and rendering it, if I can, more agreeable to you: for I see not of what use I am, or can be, in other respects. I shall be impatient till I hear you are safely landed, and as impatient after that till you are safely arrived in your winter quarters. God, I hope, will favour you with good weather, and all manner of good accidents on the way; and I will take care, my dear love, to make you as easy and happy as I can at the end of your journey.

I have written to Mr. Morice about every thing I can think of relating to your accommodation on the road, and shall not therefore repeat any part of it in this letter, which is intended only to acknowledge a mistake under which I find myself. I thought I loved you before as much as I could possibly; but I feel such new degrees of tenderness arising in me upon this terrible long journey, as I was never before acquainted with. God will reward you, I hope, for your piety to me, which had, I doubt not, its share in producing this resolution, and will, in rewarding you, reward me also; that being the chief thing I have to beg of Him.

Adieu, my dear heart, till I see you! and till then satisfy yourself, that, whatever uneasiness your journey may give you, my expectation of you, and concern for you, will give me more. I am got to another page, and must do violence to myself to stop here—but I will—and abruptly bid you, my dear heart, adieu, till I bid you welcome to Montpelier.

A line, under your own hand, pray, by the post that first sets out after you land at Bourdeaux.

LETTER XI.

Mr. J. Evans to his Brother in London.

Toulouse, Nov. 9, 1729.

Dear brother,

AFTER a very tedious and fatiguing journey, Mr. Morice and his lady arrived here on Monday morning, the 7th, about seven o'clock, when she met her father: the only thing, I believe, she had to desire of God in this world. She went to bed, and never slept till she slept her last; and well may it be called so; for never was death received in so composed a manner, as I shall distinctly relate to you from Montpelier. She received the sacrament (upon her earnestly desiring to have it if possible) about an hour and a half before she expired. That remaining time she employed in directing what she would have done in the most material things that relate to family affairs, and that in a very moving manner; and one of the last was to call her husband to her; when she said; "Dear Mr. Morice, take care of the children—I know you will: remember me to the duchess of Buckingham!"—This fatal stroke being given on the way to her intended port, must, you will think, put us into uncommon disorder. Mr. Morice goes for England as soon as in a condition to do it. Pray give my family an account of this; and I shall, from Montpelier, do the same at large, as well as to yourself. Adieu! Yours most affectionately.

LETTER XII.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

I VENTURE to thank you for your kind and friendly letter, because I think myself very sure of a safe conveyance; and I am uneasy till I have told you what impressions it made upon me. I will do it with the same simplicity and truth with which I wrote to you from Montpelier upon a very melancholy occasion; the memory of which would have been in the most touching manner awakened by what you writ, had it been entirely laid asleep, as it never will or can be. Time, and a succession of other objects, added to reason and religion (for even these great principles, that should command our nature, want now and then

some assistances from it) may divert the attention of my mind from what it loves too much to think of, though it finds no pleasure in such thoughts: they may deaden the quick sense of grief, and prevent the frequent returns of it; but where it is well fixed, they cannot extinguish it.

LETTER XIII.

*The Bishop of Rochester to * * * *.*

[Undated.]

Dear sir,

YOUR endeavours that I may forget my misfortune are truly noble. It would be to deserve them to fly from resolution. They shall not depress me; but I must help to bear what you tell me lies so heavy upon my friends. I preserve a mean; which is the excellence, justice, and fitness of all things in the moral system:

Virtue's a mean, and vice is an excess,
In doing more than's fit, or doing less.

To poetise, my friend, is no mark of a depressed fancy or excessive sorrow; but a sort of comical way of treating things serious, not after the subtle fashions of those you speak of, that would magnify Nature by depressing the Deity; who, setting forth their necessary agreement, make unnecessary strife. With reverence do I mention these things, and know

How the great love of nature fills thy mind,
And universal kindness to thy kind.

I am, while thus juvenile, an advocate for, and not a railer against, extremes. Those symptoms strongly bode a second youth, that vapours with a feeble and defective flame! It is the enervated arm of Priam impotently raised against the thundering rage of youthful Pyrrhus. However, this epistle, my dear friend, shall not become more tawdry by its not being of a piece; for I will conclude with answering your last serious question with another scrap of poetry:

Whate'er the soul of nature has design'd,
And wrought on matter, is th' effect of mind;
The form of substance is the former's art,
Hence beauty and design that strike the heart;
There's nought in simple matter to delight,
'Tis the fair workmanship that takes the sight.
The beautiful effect of mind alone
Is comely, and in all things comely shown.
Where mind is not, there horror needs must be,
For matter formless is deformity.

LETTER XIV.

Dr. King to Bishop Atterbury.

1699.

GIVE me leave, sir, to tell you a secret—that I have spent a whole day upon Dr. Bentley's late volume of scandal and criticism*; for every one may not judge it for his credit to be so employed. He thinks meanly, I find, of my reading; as meanly as I think of his sense, his modesty, or his manners; and yet, for all that, I dare say I have read more than any man in England besides *him* and me; for I have read his book all over.

If you have looked into it, sir, you have found, that a person, under the pretence of criticism, may take what freedom he pleases with the reputation and credit of any gentleman; and that he need not have any regard to another man's character, who has once resolved to expose his own.

It was my misfortune once in my life to be in the same place with Dr. Bentley, and a witness to a great deal of his rude and scurrilous language; which he was so liberal of, as to throw it out at random in a public shop;—and is so silly now as to call it *caves-dropping* in me, because he was so noisy, and I was so near, that I could not help hearing it.

You desired me, at some years distance, to recollect what passed at that meeting, and I obeyed your commands. Shall I reckon it an advantage, that Dr. Bentley, who disputes the other testimonies, falls in entirely with mine? I would, if I were not apprehensive that on that very account it might be one step farther from being credited.

However, such is his spite to me, that he confirms the truth of all I told you. For the only particular I could call to mind he grants, with some slight difference in the expression. And as to the general account I gave of his rudeness and insolence, he denies it indeed; but in so rude and insolent a manner, that there is no occasion for me to justify myself on that head.

I had declared, it seems, that he said, “the MS. of Phalaris would be worth nothing if it were collated.” He sets me right; and avers, the expression was, “That, after the various lections were

* The Dissertation on Phalaris.

once taken, and printed, the MS. would be like a squeezed orange, and little worth for the future." The similitude of "a squeezed orange," is indeed a considerable circumstance, which I had forgotten; as I doubtless did several others; but, for all that, I remember the general drift and manner of his discourse, as well as if all the particular expressions were present to me. Just as I know his last book to be a disingenuous, vain, confused, unmannerly performance; though, to my happiness, hardly any of his awkward jests or impertinent quotations stick by me.

I had owned it to be my opinion, "that a MS. was worth nothing unless it were collated." The doctor cunningly distinguishes upon me; and says, "It is worth nothing indeed to the rest of the world; but it is better for the owner, if a price were to be set upon it." I beg his pardon for my mistake. I thought we were talking of books in the way of scholars: whereas he answers me like a bookseller, and as if he dealt in MSS. instead of reading them. For my part, I measure the value of these kind of things from the advantage the public may receive from them, and not from the profit they are likely to bring in to a private owner; and therefore I have the same opinion of the Alexandrian MS.* (which, he says, "he keeps in his lodgings") now, as I should have had before the editors of the English Polyglott published the collation of it; though it may not perhaps bear up to the same price in St. Paul's Churchyard, or at an auction; but I hope, if it be safely kept, it need never come to the experiment.

As to the particular reflections he has cast on me, it is no more than I expected. I could neither hope nor wish for better treatment from one that had used you so ill. It is reputable both to men and books to be ill spoken of by him; and a favourable presumption on their side, that there is something in both which may chance to recommend them to the rest of the world. It is in the power of every little creature to throw dirty language: but a man must have some credit himself in the world, before things he says can lessen the reputation of another; and if Dr. Bentley

must be thus qualified to mischief me, I am safe from all the harm that his malice can do me. I am, sir, your obliged humble servant.

LETTER XV.

Duchess of Somerset to Lady Luxborough.

Piercy Lodge, Feb. 25, 1754.

Dear madam,

PRAY never think excuse can be necessary to me about exactness in answering my letters; I am always glad to hear from you when it is agreeable to you to write, but am not one of those over-kind friends who are for ever out of humour with those whom they rather enthrall than oblige, by giving them that name. As a proof I never wish to act so by my friends, or am afraid of being treated so by them, I will own to you, I am not quite sure I should have answered your last letter so soon, were it not that I am under serious concern to find how awkwardly I must have expressed myself to Mr. Shenstone, if I gave him room to believe I harboured a secret wish to have so fine a poem as his Ode suppressed. On the contrary, I should think myself guilty of a very great crime and injustice to the public, if I were to be the means of depriving them of so charming and rational an entertainment. I gave him the true reasons in my letter, for desiring that my own name, nor that of my humble yet peaceful dwelling, might be inserted. You know I always envied the lot of "*la violette, qui se cache sous l'herbe.*"

It is true, my dear lady Luxborough, times are changed with us, since no walk was long enough, or exercise painful enough, to hurt us, as we childishly imagined: yet after a ball or masquerade, have we not come home very well contented to pull off our ornaments and fine clothes; in order to go to rest? Such methinks is the reception we naturally give to the warnings of our bodily decays; they seem to undress us by degrees, to prepare us for a rest that will refresh us far more powerfully than any night's sleep could do. We shall then find no weariness from the fatigues which either our bodies or our minds have undergone; but all tears shall be wiped from our eyes,

* Of the Old Testament

and sorrow, and crying, and pains, shall be no more; we shall then without weariness move in our new vehicles, transport ourselves from any part of the skies to another, with much more ease and velocity than we could have done in the prime of our strength, upon the fleetest horses, the distance of a mile. This cheerful prospect enables us to see our strength fail, and await the tokens of our approaching dissolution with a kind of awful pleasure. I will ingenuously own to you, dear madam, that I experience more true happiness in the retired manner of life that I have embraced, than I ever knew from all the splendour or flatteries of the world. There was always a void; they could not satisfy a rational mind; and at the most heedless time of my youth, I well remember, that I always looked forward with a kind of joy, to a decent retreat, when the evening of life should make it practicable.

Boadicea I have read; there is an interesting scene or two in it; but there is something wanting in the management of the drama to keep up the spirits of the audience. Philoclea I have not seen, nor have heard such a character of it as to raise my curiosity. If you have not read *Deformity*, an Essay, by Mr. Hay, nor his *Religio Philosophi* (I do not know how that last word should end), I believe they will entertain you very well in their different ways. The *Adventurer* will soon be published in volumes, and will be very well worth buying. I doubt I must agree with Mr. Shenstone, that the style of Sir Charles Grandison is too prolix; and yet I do not know any of it I should be willing to part with, except Harriet Byron's conversation with the Oxonian, in the first volume, and the preparations and entertainments at sir Charles's wedding in the fifth.

When I came home from taking the air on Friday, I was very agreeably surprised to find lady Northumberland ready to receive me, as I had no notion of her coming. She had been alarmed with a false report, that I had not been so well for some days as she left me. I took the opportunity of shewing her your letter, and she desired me to make her compliments to your ladyship, and tell you, she keeps no servant about lady Elizabeth, while she is at school,

and at her return will think it necessary to have a person of a middle age about her. Such a one she now has about her little boy; a pretty sort of woman, who speaks French and English equally well, is grave and properly behaved, and, I believe, hopes for lady Elizabeth's place, when her little angel of a master goes into the hands of the men. His mamma took him away with her on Saturday, after lending him to me for a month (though she is excessively fond of him), because she sees he is the joy of my life. He has some faint resemblance (thought not a good one) of his poor uncle; but his openness and mildness of temper are the very same. Her eldest boy too is a very sensible and good one. He and lady Greville dine with me from Eton every Sunday; they are here at present for two or three days, on account of there being holidays. I have hardly left myself room to make Mr. Cowslad's compliments, and subscribe myself, dear madam, your, &c.

LETTER XVI.

Countess of Hertford to Dr. Burnet, occasioned by some Meditations the Doctor sent her, upon the Death of her Son, Lord Beauchamp.

Sir,

I AM very sensibly obliged by the kind compassion you express for me, under my heavy affliction. The meditations you have furnished me with, afford the strongest motives for consolation that can be offered to a person under my unhappy circumstances. The dear lamented son I have lost was the pride and joy of my heart; but I hope I may be the more easily excused for having looked on him in this light, since he was not so from the outward advantages he possessed, but from the virtues and rectitude of his mind. The prospects which flattered me, in regard to him, were not drawn from his distinguished rank, or from the beauty of his person; but from the hopes that his example would have been serviceable to the cause of virtue, and would have shewn the younger part of the world, that it was possible to be cheerful without being foolish or vicious, and to be religious without severity or melancholy. His

whole life was one uninterrupted course of duty and affection to his parents ; and when he found the hand of death upon him, his only regret was to think on the agonies which must rend their hearts ; for he was perfectly content to leave the world, as his conscience did not reproach him with any presumptuous sins, and he hoped his errors would be forgiven. Thus he resigned his innocent soul into the hands of his merciful Creator, on the evening of his birth-day, which completed him nineteen. You will not be surprised, sir,

that the death of such a son should occasion the deepest sorrow ; yet, at the same time, it leaves us the most comfortable assurance, that he is happier than our fondest wishes and care could have made him, which must enable us to support the remainder of years, which it shall please God to allot for us here, without murmuring or discontent, and quicken our endeavours to prepare ourselves to follow to that happy place, where our dear valuable child is gone before us. I beg the continuance of your prayers, and am, sir, your, &c.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION I.

FROM THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ. AND MR. GRAY,
TO AND FROM THEIR FRIENDS.

LETTER I.

Mr. Shenstone to a Friend.

From Mr. Wintle's, Perfumer,
near Temple Bar, &c.
6th Feb. 1740.

Dear sir,

I AM now, with regard to the town, pretty much in the same state in which I expect to be always with regard to the world; sometimes exclaiming and railing against it; sometimes giving it a good word, and even admiring it. A sunshiny-day, a tavern-supper after a play well acted, and now and then an invigorating breath of air in the Mall, never fail of producing a cheerful effect. I do not know whether I gave you any account of Quin's acting Falstaff in my former letter; I really imagined that I saw you tittering on one side me, shaking your sides, and sometimes scarce containing yourself. You will pardon the attitude in which I placed you, since it was what seemed natural at that circumstance of time. Comus I have once been at, for the sake of the songs, though I detest it in any light; but as a dramatic piece, the taking of it seems a prodigy; yet indeed such a one, as was pretty tolerably accounted for by a gentleman who sat by me in the boxes. This learned sage, being asked how he liked the play, made answer, "He could not tell—pretty well, he thought—or indeed as well as any other play—he always took it, that people only came there to see, and be seen—for as for what was said, he owned, he never understood any thing of the matter." I told him, I thought a great many of its admirers were in this case, if they would but own it.

On the other hand, it is amazing to consider to what an universality of learning people make pretensions here. There is not a drawer, a chair or hackney coach man, but is politician, poet, and judge of polite literature. Chimney sweepers damn the convention, and black shoe boys cry up the genius of Shakespeare. "The Danger of writing Verse" is a very good thing; if you have not read it, I would recommend it to you as poetical. But now I talk of learning, I must not omit an interview which I accidentally had the other night in company with lord D—— and one Mr. C——. We were taken to sup at a private house, where I found a person whom I had never seen before. The man behaved exceeding modestly and well; till, growing a little merry over a bottle (and being a little countenanced by the subject we were upon), he pulls out of his pocket about half a dozen ballads, and distributes them amongst the company. I (not finding at first they were of his own composition) read one over, and, finding it a dull piece of stuff, contented myself with observing that it was exceedingly well printed. But to see the man's face on this occasion would make you pity the circumstance of an author as long as you live. His jollity ceased (as a flame would do, should you pour water upon it); and, I believe, for about five minutes, he spoke not a syllable. At length recovering himself, he began to talk about his country seat, about Houghton Hall, and soon after desired a health, imagining (as I found afterwards) that lord D—— would have given sir Robert's. But he

did not, naming sir T— L—. Mine, which followed, was that of Mr. L—. Now, who do you think this should be, but honest Ralph Freeman (at least the writer of the paper so subscribed), your father's old friend and intimate, sir Robert's right hand, a person that lives elegantly, drive six of the best horses in the town, and plays on St. John's organ (you know Mr. L— is not only sir Robert's greatest enemy, but the Gazetteer's proper antagonist). We were invited to see him very civilly; and indeed the man behaved with the utmost good-humour, without arrogance, or any attempts at wit, which probably would not have been very successful.—Ask your father what he would say to me, if I should join in the cause with his old friend, and take a good annuity under sir Robert, which, I believe, I might have; and little encouragement, God knows, have I met with on the other side of the question. I say, I believe I might have, because I know a certain person gives pensions of three pounds a-week to porters and the most illiterate stupid fellows you can imagine, to talk in his behalf at ale-houses; where they sit so long a time, and are as regularly relieved as one sentry relieves another.—At least tell him that I expect in his answer to my letter (which I shall not allow him to assign to you) he write something to confirm me in my integrity, and to make me prefer him, and you, and honesty, to lace, brocade, and the smiles of the ladies.

Et Veneri, et cunis, et plumis Sardanapali.

But I hope to keep my Hercules in view, whether in print or manuscript; and though I am as fond of pleasure as most people, yet I shall observe the rule,

Positam sic tangere noli.

I desire I may hear from you next post: I have a line or two, which I intend for the sons of utter darkness (as you call them) next magazine: I would send them to you, for your advice, but cannot readily find them. I like every thing in Mr. Somerville's but the running of the last line. I think to insert them. Should be glad to have a line or two of yours, that one may make a bold attack. I look on it as fun, without the least emotion, I assure you. I am, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER II.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago, on the Death of his Father.

Leasowes, Aug. 28, 1740.

Dear Mr. Jago,
I FIND some difficulty in writing to you on this melancholy occasion. No one can be more unfit to attempt to lessen your grief than myself, because no one has a deeper sense of the cause of your affliction. Though I would by no means be numbered by you amongst the common herd of your acquaintance that tell you they are sorry, yet it were impertinent in me to mention a mere friend's concern to a person interested by so many more tender regards. Besides, I should be glad to alleviate your sorrow, and such sort of condolence tends but little to promote that end. I do not choose to flatter you: neither could I, more especially at this time; but though I could perhaps find enough to say to persons of less sense than you, I know of nothing but what your own reason must have suggested. Concern indeed may have suspended the power of that faculty; and upon that pretence, I have a few things that I would suggest to you. After all, it is time alone that can and will cure all afflictions, and such as are the consequence of vice; and yours, I am sure, proceeds from a contrary principle.

I heard accidentally of this sorrowful event, and accompanied you to London with the utmost concern. I wished it was in my power to mitigate your griefs by sharing them, as I have often found it in yours to augment my pleasure by so doing.

All that I can recommend to you is, not to confine your eye to any single event in life, but to take in your whole circumstances before you repine.

When you reflect that you have lost one of the best of men in a father, you ought to comfort yourself that you had such a father; to whom I cannot forbear applying these lines from Milton:—

———“ Since to part!
Go, heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger!
Sent by whose sovereign goodness we adore!
Gentle to me, and affable has been
Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With gratefulst memory.”

End of Book viii, PAR. LOST.

I would have you by all means come

over hither as soon as you can. I will endeavour to render the time you spend here as satisfactory as it is in my power; and I hope you will ever look upon me as your hearty friend, through all the vicissitudes of life.

Pray give my humble service to Mrs. Jago and your brother. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Reynolds.

Leasowes, Aug. 1740.

Dear sir,

WONDERFUL were the dangers and difficulties through which I went, the night I left you at Barrels; which I looked upon as ordained by fate for the temporal punishment of obstinacy. It was very kind, and in character, for you to endeavour to deter me from the ways of darkness; but having a sort of *penchant* for needless difficulties, I have an undoubted right to indulge myself in them so long as I do not insist upon any one's pity. It is true, these ought not to exceed a certain degree; they should be *lenia tormenta*; and I must own the labour I underwent that night did not come within the bounds which my imagination had prescribed. I cannot forbear mentioning one imminent danger. I rode along a considerable piece of water, covered so close with trees, that it was as probable I might have pursued the channel, which was dangerous, as my way out of it. Or, to put my case in a more poetical light, having by night intruded upon an amour betwixt a Wood-nymph and a River-god, I owed my escape to Fortune, who conveyed me from the vengeance which they might have taken. I put up finally at a little alehouse about ten o'clock, and lay all night awake, counting the cords which supported me, which I could more safely swear to than to either bed or blanket. For farther particulars, see my epistle to the Pastor Fido of Lapworth. Mr. Graves says, he should be glad to shew you any civilities in his power, upon his own acquaintance; and will serve you as far as his vote goes, upon my recommendation; but is afraid, without the concurrence of some more considerable friends, your chance will be but small this year, &c. If the former part of this

news gives you any pleasure, I assure you it gives me no less to communicate it; and this pleasure proceeds from a principle, which would induce me to serve you myself if it should ever be in my power. I saw Mr. Lyttleton last week; he is a candidate for the county of Worcester, together with Lord Deerhurst; I hope Mr. Somerville will do him the honour to appear as his friend, which he must at least think second to that of succeeding.

I hear you are commenced chaplain since I saw you. I wish you joy of it. The chaplain's title is infinitely more agreeable than his office; and I hope the scarf, which is expressive of it, will be no diminutive thing, no four-penny-half-penny piece of ribboning; but that it will

“ High o'er the neck its rustling folds display, }
Disdain all usual bounds, extend its sway, }
Usurp the head, and push the wig away.” }

I hope it will prove ominous, that my first letter is a congratulatory one; and if I were to have opportunities of sending all such, it would entirely quadrate with the sincere wishes of your, &c.

I beg my compliments to Mr. Somerville, Mrs. Knight, and your family.

LETTER IV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. ———, on his taking Orders in the Church.

Leasowes, June 8, 1741.

Dear sir,

I WRITE to you out of the abundant inclination I have to hear from you; imagining that, as you gave me a direction, you might possibly expect to receive a previous letter from me. I want to be informed of the impressions you receive from your new circumstances. The chief aversion which some people have to orders is, what I fancy you will remove in such as you converse with. I take it to be owing partly to dress, and partly to the avowed profession of religion. A young clergyman, that has distinguished his genius by a composition or two of a polite nature, and is capable of dressing himself and his religion in a different manner from the generality of his profession, that is, without formality, is certainly a genteel character. I speak

this not with any sly design to advise, but to intimate that I think you very capable of shining in a dark-coloured coat. You must consider me yet as a man of the world, and endeavouring to elicit that pleasure from gaiety which my reason tells me I shall never find. It is impossible to express how stupid I have been ever since I came home, insomuch that I cannot write a common letter without six repetitions. 'This is the third time I have begun yours, and you see what stuff it is made up of. I must e'en hasten to matter of fact, which is the comfortable resource of dull people, though, even as to that, I have nothing to communicate. But I would be glad to know, whether you are under a necessity of residing on week days; and, if not, why I may not expect you a day or two at the Leasowes very soon. Did you make any inquiry concerning the number of my poems sold at Oxford? Or did you hear any thing concerning it that concerns me to hear?—Will. S— (for that is his true name) is the excess of simplicity and good nature. He seems to have all the industry imaginable to divert and amuse people, without any ambitious end to serve, or almost any concern whether he has so much as a laugh allowed to his stories, any farther than as a laugh is an indication that people are delighted. This, joined with his turn of thought, renders him quite agreeable. I wish it were in my power to conciliate acquaintance with half his ease. Pray do not delay writing to me. Adieu.

LETTER V.

Mr. Shenstone to a Friend, expressing his Dissatisfaction at the Manner of Life in which he is engaged.

1741.

Dear sir,

I WONDER I have not heard from you lately—of you indeed I have, from Mr. W—. If you could come over, probably I might go back with you for a day or two; for my horse, I think, gets rather better, and may, with indulgence, perform such a journey. I want to advise with you about several matters;—to have your opinion about a building

that I have built, and about a journey which I design to Bath; and about numberless things, which, as they are numberless, cannot be comprehended in this paper. I am your, &c.

Now I am come home from a visit—every little uneasiness is sufficient to introduce my whole train of melancholy considerations, and to make me utterly dissatisfied with the life I now lead, and the life which I foresee I shall lead. I am angry, and envious, and dejected, and frantic, and disregard all present things, just as becomes a madman to do. I am infinitely pleased (though it is a gloomy joy) with the application of Dr. Swift's complaint, "that he is forced to die in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole." My soul is no more suited to the figure I make, than a cable rope to a cambric needle:—I cannot bear to see the advantages alienated, which I thine I could deserve and relish so much more than those that have them. Nothing can give me patience but the soothing sympathy of a friend, and that will only turn my rage into simple melancholy.—I believe soon I shall bear to see nobody. I do hate all hereabouts already, except one or two. I will have my dinner brought upon my table in my absence, and the plates fetched away in my absence; and nobody shall see me; for I can never bear to appear in the same stupid mediocrity for years together, and gain no ground. As Mr. G— complained to me (and, I think, you too, both unjustly), "I am no character."—I have in my temper some rakishness, but it is checked by want of spirits; some solidity, but it is softened by vanity; some esteem of learning, but it is broke in upon by laziness, imagination, and want of memory, &c.—I could reckon up twenty things throughout my whole circumstances wherein I am thus tantalized. Your fancy will present them.—Not that all I say here will signify to you: I am only under a fit of dissatisfaction, and to grumble does me good—only excuse me, that I cure myself at your expense. Adieu!

LETTER VI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. —, with an Invitation to accompany him to Town.

The Leasowes, Nov. 25, 1741.

Dear sir,

THE reason why I write to you so suddenly is, that I have a proposal to make to you. If you could contrive to be in London for about a month from the end of December, I imagine you would spend it agreeably enough along with me, Mr. Outing, and Mr. Whistler. According to my calculations, we should be a very happy party at a play, coffee-house, or tavern. Do not let your supercilious friends come in upon you with their prudential maxims. Consider you are now of the proper age for pleasure, and have not above four or five whimsical years left. You have not struck one bold stroke yet, that I know of. Saddle your mule, and let us be jogging to the great city. I will be answerable for amusement. — Let me have the pleasure of seeing you in the pit, in a laughter as cordial and singular as your friendship. — Come — let us go forth into the Opera-house; let us hear how the eunuch-folk sing. Turn your eye upon the lilies and roses, diamonds and rubies; the Belindas and the Sylvias of gay life! Think upon Mrs. Clive's inexpressible comicalness; not to mention Hipposley's joke-abounding physiognomy! Think, I say, now; for the time cometh when you shall say, "I have no pleasure in them."

I am conscious of much merit in bringing about the interview betwixt Mr. L — and Mr. S —; but merit, as Sir John Falstaff says, is not regarded in these coster-monger days.

Pray now do not write me word that your business will not allow you ten minutes in a fortnight to write to me; an excuse fit for none but a cobbler, who has ten children dependent upon a waxen thread. Adieu.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same.

1741.

My good friend,
OUR old friend Somerville is dead! I

did not imagine I could have been so sorry as I find myself on this occasion — "*Sublatum quærimus.*" I can now excuse all his foibles; impute them to age and to distress of circumstances; the last of these considerations wrings my very soul to think on. For a man of high spirit, conscious of having (at least in one production) generally pleased the world, to be plagued and threatened by wretches that are low in every sense; to be forced to drink himself into pains of the body, in order to get rid of the pains of the mind; is a misery which I can well conceive, because I may, without vanity, esteem myself his equal in point of œconomy, and consequently ought to have an eye on his misfortunes (as you kindly hinted to me about twelve o'clock at the Feathers): I should retrench; — I will; but you shall not see me: — I will not let you know that I took your hint in good part. I will do it at solitary times, as I may; and yet there will be some difficulty in it; for whatever the world might esteem in poor Somerville, I really find, upon critical inquiry, that I loved him for nothing so much as his flocci-nauci-nihili-pili-fication of money.

Mr. A — was honourably acquitted: lord A —, who was present, and behaved very insolently they say, was hissed out of court. They proved his application to the carpenter's son, to get him to swear against Mr. A —, though the boy was proved to have said in several companies (before he had been kept at lord A —'s house) that he was sure the thing was accidental. Finally, it is believed he will recover the title of A — ea.

The apprehension of the whores, and the suffocation of four in the round-house by the stupidity of the keeper, engrosses the talk of the town. The said house is rebuilding every day (for the mob on Sunday night demolished it), and redemolished it every night. The duke of M — gh, J — S — his brother, lord C — G —, were taken into the round-house, and confined from eleven at night till eleven next day: I am not positive of the duke of M — gh; the others are certain; and that a large number of people of the first fashion went from the round-house to De Veil's, to give in informations of their usage.

The justice himself seems greatly scared ; the prosecution will be carried on with violence, so as probably to hang the keeper, and there is an end.

Lord Bath's coachman got drunk and tumbled from his box, and he was forced to borrow lord Orford's. Wits say, that it was but gratitude for my lord Orford's coachman to drive my lord Bath, as my lord Bath himself had driven my lord Orford. Thus they.

I have ten million things to tell you ; though they all amount to no more than that I wish to please you, and that I am your sincere friend and humble servant.

I am pleased that I can say I knew Mr. Somerville, which I am to thank you for.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on Benevolence and Friendship.

The Leasowes, Jan. 19, 1741-2.

Dear Mr. Graves,
I CANNOT forbear immediately writing to you : the pleasure your last letter gave me, put it out of my power to restrain the overflowings of my benevolence. I can easily conceive, that, upon some extraordinary instances of friendship, my heart might be *si fort attendri* that I could not bear any restraint upon my ability to shew my gratitude. It is an observation I made upon reading to-day's paper, which contains an account of C. Khevenhuller's success in favour of the queen of Hungary. To think what sublime affection must influence that poor unfortunate queen, should a faithful and zealous general revenge her upon her enemies, and restore her ruined affairs !

Had a person shewn an esteem and affection for me, joined with any elegance or without any elegance in the expression of it, I should have been in acute pain till I had given some sign of my willingness to serve him. From all this, I conclude that I have more humanity than some others.

Probably enough I shall never meet with a larger share of happiness than I feel at present. If not, I am thoroughly convinced, my pain is greatly superior to my pleasure. That pleasure is not ab-

solutely dependent on the mind, I know from this, that I have enjoyed happier scenes in the company of some friends than I can possibly at present ; — but, alas ! all the time you and I shall enjoy together, abstracted from the rest of our lives, and lumped, will not perhaps amount to a solid year and a half. How small a proportion !

People will say to one that talks thus, " Would you die ? " To set the case upon a right footing, they must take away the hopes of greater happiness in this life, the fears of greater misery hereafter, together with the bodily pain of dying, and address me in a disposition betwixt mirth and melancholy ; and I could easily resolve them.

I do not know how I am launched out so far into this complaint : it is, perhaps, a strain of constitutional whining ; the effect of the wind — did it come from the winds ? to the winds will I deliver it :

*Tradam protervis in mare Creticum,
Portare ventis —*

I will be as happy as my fortune will permit, and make others so ;

*Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura —*

I will be so. The joke is, that the description which you gave of that country was, that you had few trees about you ; so that I shall trick fortune if she should grant my petition implicitly. But, in earnest, I intend to come and stay a day or two with you next summer.

Mr. Whistler is at Mr. Gosling's, bookseller, at the Mitre and Crown, in Fleet Street, and inquired much after you in his last letter to me. He writes to me ; but I believe his affection for one weighs less with him while the town is in the other scale ; though he is very obliging. I do not know whether I do right, when I say I believe we three, that is, in solitary circumstances, have an equal idea of, and affection for, each other. I say, supposing each to be alone, or in the country, which is nearly the same ; for scenes alter minds as much as the air influences bodies. For instance, when Mr. Whistler is in town, I suppose we love him better than he does us ; and when we are in town, I suppose the same may be said in regard to him.

The true burlesque of Spenser, whose characteristic is simplicity, seems to consist in a simple representation of such things as one laughs to see or to observe one's self, rather than in any monstrous contrast betwixt the thoughts and words. I cannot help thinking, that my added stanzas have more of his manner than what you saw before, which you are not a judge of till you have read him.

LETTER IX.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves.

1743.

Dear sir,

I LONG heartily to talk over affairs with you *tête-à-tête*; but am an utter enemy to the fatigue of transcribing what might pass well enough in conversation. I shall say nothing more concerning my departure from L—, than that it was necessary, and therefore excusable. I have been since with a gentleman upon the borders of Wales, Bishop's Castle, from whence I made a digression one day beyond Offa's Dyke; saw mountains which converted all that I had seen into mole-hills; and houses, which changed the Leasowes into Hampton Court: where they talk of a glazed window as a piece of magnificence; and where their highest idea of his majesty is, that he can ride in such a coach as 'squire Jones or 'squire Pryce's. The woman of the inn, at one place, said, "Glass (in windows) was very genteel, that it was; but she could not afford such finery."

You agree with the rest of the married world in a propensity to make proselytes. This inclination in some people gives one a kind of dread of the matter. They are ill-natured, and can only wish one in their own state because they are unhappy; like persons that have the plague, who, they say, are ever desirous to propagate the infection. I make a contrary conclusion when you commend marriage, as you seem to do, when you wish miss — may reconcile me to more than the name of wife. I know not what you have heard of my amour; probably more than I can thoroughly confirm to you. And what if I should say to you, that marriage was not once the subject of our conversation?

— *Nec conjugis unquam
Præcendi lædas, aut hæc in sæcula veni.*

Do not you think every thing in nature strangely improved since you were married, from the tea table to the warming pan?

I want to see Mrs. Jago's hand-writing, that I may judge of her temper; but she must write something in my praise. Pray see you to it, in your next letter.

I could parodize my lord Carteret's letter from Dettingen, if I had it by me. "Mrs. Arnold (thanks be praised!) has this day gained a very considerable victory. The scold lasted two hours. Mrs. S—c was posted in the hall, and Mrs. Arnold upon the staircase; which superiority of ground was of no small service to her in the engagement. The fire lasted the whole space, without intermission; at the close of which the enemy was routed, and Mrs. Arnold kept the field."

Did you hear the song to the tune of "The Cuckow?"

"The Baron stood behind a tree,
In woful plight, for nought heard he
But cannon, cannon, &c.
O word of fear!
Unpleasing to a German ear."

The notes that fall upon the word "cannon" express the sound with its echo admirably.

I send you my pastoral elegy (or ballad, if you think that name more proper), on condition that you return it with ample remarks in your next letter: I say "return it," because I have no other copy, and am too indolent to take one. Adieu.

LETTER X.

*From the same to the same; written in
Hay Harvest.*

July 3, 1743.

Dear Mr. Graves,

I DID not part from you without a great deal of melancholy. To think of the short duration of those interviews which are the objects of one's continual wishes, has been a reflection that has plagued me of old. I am sure I returned home with it then, more aggravated, as I foresaw myself returning to the same series of melancholy hours from which you had a while relieved me, and which I had particularly suffered under all this last spring. I wish to God you might hap-

pen to be settled not far from me: a day's journey distance, however; I mean an easy one. But the odds are infinitely against me. I must only rely for my happiness on the hopes of a never-ceasing correspondence!

Soon after you were gone I received my packet. The History of Worcestershire is mere stuff. T— I am so fond of, that I believe I shall have his part of the collection bound over again, neatly and separately. But sure Hammond has no right to the least inventive merit, as the preface writer would insinuate. I do not think there is a single thought, of any eminence, that is not literally translated. I am astonished he could content himself with being so little an original.

Mr. Lyttelton and his lady are at Hagley. A malignant caterpillar has demolished the beauty of all her large oaks. Mine are secured by their littleness. But I guess the park suffers; a large wood near me being a mere winter-piece for nakedness.

At present I give myself up to riding and thoughtlessness; being resolved to make trial of their efficacy towards a tolerable degree of health and spirits. I wish I had you for my director. I should proceed with great confidence of success; though I am brought very low by two or three fits of a fever since I saw you. Had I written to you in the midst of my dispirited condition, as I was going, you would have had a more tender and unaffected letter than I can write at another time; what I think, perhaps, at all times; but what sickness can alone elicit from a temper fearful of whining.

Surely the "*nunc formosissimus annus*" is to be limited to hay harvest. I could give my reasons: but you will imagine them to be, the activity of country people in a pleasing employment; the full verdure of the summer; the prime of pinks, woodbines, jasmines, &c. I am old, very old; for few things give me so much mechanical pleasure as lolling on a bank in the very heat of the sun,

"When the old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday."

And yet it is as much as I can do to keep Mrs. Arnold from going to neighbouring houses in her smock, in despite of decency and my known disapprobation.

I find myself more of a patriot than I

ever thought I was. Upon reading the account of the battle I found a very sensible pleasure, or, as the Methodists term it, "perceived my heart enlarged," &c. The map you sent me is a pretty kind of toy, but does not enough particularize the scenes of the war, &c., which was the end I had in view when I sent for it.

"*O dura messorum ilia!*" About half the appetite, digestion, strength, spirits, &c. of a mower, would make me the happiest of mortals! I would be understood literally and precisely. Adieu.

LETTER XI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves; after the Disappointment of a Visit.

The Leasowes, Nov. 9, 1743.

Dear sir,

I AM tempted to begin my letter as Memmius does his harangue, "*Multa me dehortantur a vobis, ni studium virtutis vestra omnia exsuperet.*" You contrive interviews of about a minute's duration; and you make appointments in order to disappoint one; and yet, at the same time that your proceedings are thus vexatious, force one to bear testimony to the inestimable value of your friendship! I do insist upon it, that you ought to compound for the disappointment you have caused me, by a little letter every post you stay in town. I shall now scarce see you till next summer, or spring at soonest; and then I may probably take occasion to visit you, under pretence of seeing Derbyshire. Truth is, your prints have given me some curiosity to see the original places. I am grateful for your intentions with regard to giving me part of them; and impertinent in desiring you to convey them to me as soon as you can well spare them. Let me know if they are sold separately at the print shops. I think to recommend them to my new acquaintance, Mr. Lyttelton Brown. I like the humour of the ballad you mention, but am more obliged for your partial opinion of me. The notes that fall upon the word "cannon, cannon," are admirably expressive of the sound, I dare say: I mean jointly with its echo: and so, I suppose, you will think, if you ever attended to the Tower guns. I find I cannot afford to go to Bath previously to my London journey; though I look upon it as a pro-

per method to make my residence in town more agreeable. I shall probably be there about the first of December; or before, if I can accelerate my friend Whistler's journey. The pen I write with is the most disagreeable of pens! But I have little else to say; only this—that our good friend Jack Dolman is dead at Aldridge, his father's benefice.

I beg, if you have leisure, you would inclose me in a frank the following songs, with the notes: “Stella and Flavia,” “Gentle Jessy,” “Sylvia, wilt thou waste thy prime?” and any other that is new. I should be glad of that number of the British Orpheus which has my song in it, if it does not cost above sixpence. Make my compliments to your brother and sister; and believe me, in the common forms, but in no common degree, dear Mr. Graves's most affectionate friend and servant.

Do write out the whole ballad of “The Baron stood behind a Tree.”

LETTER XII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, with Thoughts on Advice.

The Leasowes, Sept. 21, 1747.

Dear Mr. Graves,

I AM under some apprehension that you dread the sight of a letter from me, as it seems to lay claim to the compliment of an answer. I will therefore write you one that shall waive its privilege, at least till such time as your leisure encourages, or your present dissipation does not forbid you to send one. I dare now no longer expatiate upon the affair you have in hand; it is enough for me if you will excuse the freedom I have taken. I have often known delay produce good effects in some cases, which even sagacity itself could not surmount; and, if I thought I did not go too far, would presume to recommend it now. You know I have very little of the temper of an alderman. I almost hate the idea of wealthiness as much as the word. It seems to me to carry a notion of fulness, stagnation, and insignificancy. It is this disposition of mine that can alone give any weight to the advice I send you, as it proves me not to give it through any partiality to fortune. As

to what remains, you are, I hope, assured of the value I must ever have for you in any circumstances, and the regard I shall always shew for any that belongs to you. I cannot like you less or more. I now drop into other matters. Bergen, I see, is taken at last; pray what are the sentiments of your political companions? I dined some time ago with Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. Pitt, who both agreed it was worth twenty thousand men to the French; which is a light in which I never used to consider it. Any little intimation that you please to confer upon me, enables me to seem wise in this country for a month; particularly if I take care to adjust my face accordingly. As I was returning last Sunday from church, whom should I meet in my way, but that sweet-souled bard Mr. James Thomson, in a chaise drawn by two horses lengthways? I welcomed him into the country, and asked him to accompany Mr. Lyttelton to the Leasowes (who had offered me a visit), which he promised to do. So I am in daily expectations of them and all the world this week. I fancy they will lavish all their praises upon nature, reserving none for poor art and me. But if I ever live, and am able to perfect my schemes, I shall not despair of pleasing the few I first began with, the few friends prejudiced in my favour; and then *Fico per los malignatores*. Censures will not affect me; for I am armed so strong in vanity, that they will pass by me as the idle wind which I regard not, I think it pretty near equal, in a country place, whether you gain the small number of tasters, or the large crowd of the vulgar. The latter are more frequently met with, and gape, stupent, and stare much more. But one would choose to please a few friends of taste before mob or gentry, the great vulgar or the small; because therein one gratifies both one's social passions and one's pride, that is, one's self-love. Above all things, I would wish to please you; and if I have a wish that projects or is prominent beyond the rest, it is to see you placed to your satisfaction near me; but Fortune must vary from her usual treatment before she favours me so far. And yet there was a time, when one might probably have prevailed on her. I knew not what to do. The affair was so intricately circumstanced—your surpris-

ing silence after the hint I gave. Mr. D— offering to serve any friend of mine; nay, pressing me to use the opportunity. His other relations, his guardians, teasing him with sure symptoms of a rupture in case of a refusal on their side. Mr. P— soliciting me if the place were sold, which it could not legally be. Friendship, propriety, impartiality, self-interest (which I little regarded), endeavouring to distract me; I think I never spent so disagreeable an half-year since I was born. To close the whole, I could not foresee the event, which is almost foretold in your last letter, and I knew I could not serve you; but I must render it a necessary one. In short, when I can tell you the whole affair at leisure, you will own it to be of such a nature, that I must be ever in suspense concerning my behaviour, and of course shall never reflect on it with pleasure. Believe me, with the truest affection, yours.

LETTER XIII.

From the same to the same.

It is somewhere about the 20th of Sept. 1747; and I write from The Leasowes.

Dear sir,

I THINK I have lived to out-correspond almost all my correspondents; whether you are the last that is to be subdued, I will not say; the rest are so fatigued, that they are not able to achieve a line. Apprised of this, and being by nature disposed to have mercy on the vanquished (*parcere subjectis*), I seldom write a syllable more than is requisite to further some scheme, or ascertain some interview, the latter of these being the purpose of this mine epistle. I am in great hopes I shall be at liberty to see you ere many weeks be past; and would beg of you, in the mean time, to inform me, by a letter, when I am likely, or when very unlikely, to meet with you at home. I am detained, just at present, by continual expectations of the Hagley family.

As I was returning from church on Sunday last, whom should I meet, in a chaise with two horses lengthways, but that right friendly bard Mr. Thomson? I complimented him upon his arrival in this country, and asked him to accompany Mr. Lyttelton to the Leasowes, which he said he would with abundance

of pleasure: and so we parted. You will observe, that the more stress I lay upon this visit, and the more I discover to you, the more substantial is my apology for deferring mine into Warwickshire. I own, I am pleased with the prospect of shewing them something at the Leasowes beyond what they expect. I have begun my terrace on the high hill I shewed you, made some considerable improvements in Virgil's Grove, and finished a walk from it to the house, after a manner which you will approve. They are going to build a castle in the park round the lodge, which, if well executed, must have a good effect; and they are going likewise to build a rotund to terminate the vista. The fault is, that they anticipate every thing which I propose to do when I become rich; but as that is never likely to be, perhaps it is not of any importance; but what I term rich, implies no great deal; I believe you are a witness to the moderation of my desires; and I flatter myself that you will believe your friend in that respect something above the vulgar:

*Crede non illum tibi de scelestâ
Plebe dilectum, neque sic fidelem,
Sic lucro aversum, potuisse nasci
Patre pudendo.*

If I come to your house, positively I will not go to see Mr. M—. He has been twice as near me as the Grange, with C— L—, and never deemed my place worth seeing. I doubt, you are a little too modest in praising it wherever you go. Why do not you applaud it with both hands, *utroque pollice*? "*Parcentes ego dexterâs odi, sparge rosas.*" I am so very partial to my native place, that it seems a miracle to me that it is not more famous. But I complain unjustly of you; for, as you have always contributed to my happiness, you have taken every opportunity to contribute to my figure. I wish I could say the same of some who have it more in their power.

I have yet about a thousand things to say to you, not now, though; lady L—h's visit I reserve till I see you. A coach with a coronet is a pretty kind of phenomenon at my door, few prettier, except the face of such a friend as you; for I do not want the grace to prefer a generous and spirited friendship to all the gewgaws that ambition can contrive. I have wrote out my Elegies, and heartily

wish you had them to look over before I come.—I know not how to send them.—I shall bring and leave some poetry with you.—“*Thus et odores!*” or rather a proper covering for “*Thus et odores, et piper, et quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis.*” Adieu! dear sir, believe me ever yours.

LETTER XIV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves.

1747.

Dear sir,

BEING just returned from a small excursion, it was with the utmost pleasure that I read over your letter; and, though it abounds both in wit and waggery, I sit down incontinently to answer it with none.

The agreeableness of your letters is now heightened by the surprise they give me. I must own, I have thought you in a manner lost to the amusements in which you once delighted, correspondences, works of taste and fancy, &c. If you think the opinion worth removing, you need only favour me with such a letter now and then, and I will place you (in my imagination) where you shall see all the favourites of fortune, cringing at your feet.

I think I could add about half a dozen hints to your observations on electricity, which might at least disguise the facts: and then why will you not put it into some newspaper, or monthly pamphlet? You might discover yourself to whom you have a mind. It would give more than ordinary pleasure at this time.—Some other will take the hint.—Pity your piece should not have the advantage of novelty as well as of wit!

I dined and stayed a night with Dr. E—: he was extremely obliging, and I am glad of such a friend to visit at B—. He asked much after you.—He shewed me his Ovid—I advised him to finish some one epistle highly, that he might shew it.—The whole will not take, though it goes against me to tell him so. I should be glad he could succeed at B—; and could I serve him, it would be with a safe conscience, for I take him to excel the rest of B—’s physicians far in point of speculation and diligence, &c.

I send you the song you asked for, and request of you to write me out your new

edition of the Election Verses; and, at your leisure, a copy of the poem which we altered.

THE LARK.

Go, tuneful bird, that gladd’st the skies,
To Daphne’s window speed thy way,
And there on quiv’ring pinions rise,
And there thy vocal art display.

And if she deign thy notes to hear,
And if she praise thy matin song;
Tell her, the sounds that sooth her ear,
To simple British birds belong.

Tell her in livelier plumes array’d,
The bird from Indian groves may shine:
But ask the lovely, partial maid,
What are his notes compar’d to thine?

Then bid her treat that witless beau
And all his motley race with scorn;
And heal deserving Damon’s woe,
Who sings her praise, and sings forlorn.

I am, sir, your most faithful friend
and servant.

Have you read Watson, Martyn, and Freke, on electricity? I accidentally met with the two former, by which my head is rendered almost giddy—Electrics, non-electrics, electrics *per se*, and bodies that are only conductors of electricity, have a plaguy bad effect on so vortical a brain as mine.

I will infallibly spend a week with you, perhaps about February, if it suits you: though I think too it must be later.

I have been painting in water-colours, during a visit I made, flowers. I would recommend the amusement to you, if you can allow it the time that is expedient.

I trust you will give me one entire week in the spring, when my late alterations may exhibit themselves to advantage.

LETTER XV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

The Leasowes, March 23, 1747-8.

Dear sir,

I HAVE sent Tom over for the papers which I left under your inspection; having nothing to add upon this head, but that the more freely and particularly you give me your opinion, the greater will be the obligation which I shall have to acknowledge.

I shall be very glad if I happen to receive a good large bundle of your own compositions ; in regard to which, I will observe any commands which you shall please to lay upon me.

I am favoured with a certain correspondence, by way of letter, which I told you I should be glad to cultivate ; and I find it very entertaining.

Pray did you receive my answer to your last letter, sent by way of London ? I should be extremely sorry to be debarred the pleasure of writing to you by the post, as often as I feel a violent propensity to describe the notable incidents of my life ; which amount to about as much as the tinsel of your little boy's hobby-horse.

I am on the point of purchasing a couple of busts for the niches of my hall ; and believe me, my good friend, I never proceed one step in ornamenting my little farm, but I enjoy the hopes of rendering it more agreeable to you, and the small circle of acquaintance which sometimes favour me with their company.

I shall be extremely glad to see you and Mr. Fancourt when the trees are green ; that is, in May ; but I would not have you content yourself with a single visit this summer. If Mr. Hardy (to whom you will make my compliments) inclines to favour me so far, you must calculate so as to wait on him whenever he finds it convenient ; though I have better hopes of making his reception here agreeable to him when my lord Dudley comes down. I wonder how he would like the scheme I am upon, of exchanging a large tankard for a silver standish.

I have had a couple of paintings given me since you were here. One of them is a Madonna, valued, as it is said, at ten guineas in Italy, but which you would hardly purchase at the price of five shillings. However, I am endeavouring to make it out to be one of Carlo Maratt's, who was a first hand, and famous for Madonnas ; even so as to be nick-named *Cartuccio delle Madonne*, by Salvator Rosa. Two letters of the cypher (CM) agree ; what shall I do with regard to the third ? It is a small piece, and sadly blackened. It is about the size (though not quite the shape) of the Bacchus over the parlour door, and has much such a frame.

A person may amuse himself almost as cheaply as he pleases. I find no small

delight in rearing all sorts of poultry ; geese, turkeys, pullets, ducks, &c. I am also somewhat smitten with a black-bird which I have purchased : a very fine one ; brother by father, but not by mother, to the unfortunate bird you so beautifully describe, a copy of which description you must not fail to send me ;—but as I said before, one may easily habituate one's self to cheap amusements ; that is, rural ones (for all town amusements are horridly expensive) ;—I would have you cultivate your garden ; plant flowers ; have a bird or two in the hall (they will at least amuse your children) ; write now and then a song ; buy now and then a book ; write now and then a letter to your most sincere friend, and affectionate servant.

P. S. I hope you have exhausted all your spirit of criticism upon my verses, that you may have none left to cavil at this letter ; for I am ashamed to think, that you, in particular, should receive the dullest I ever wrote in my life. Make my compliments to Mrs. Jago.—She can go a little abroad, you say.—Tell her, I should be proud to shew her the Leasowes. Adieu !

LETTER XVI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr.—, on his Marriage.

This was written August 21, 1748 ;
but not sent till the 28th.

Dear sir,
How little soever I am inclined to write at this time, I cannot bear that you should censure me of unkindness in seeming to overlook the late change in your situation. It will, I hope, be esteemed superfluous in me to send you my most cordial wishes that you may be happy ; but it will, perhaps, be something more significant to say, that I believe you will : building my opinion on the knowledge I have long had of your own temper, and the account you give me of the person whom you have made choice of, to whom I desire you to pay my sincere and most affectionate compliments.

I shall always be glad to find you *presentibus æquum*, though I should always be pleased when I saw you *tentantem majora*. I think you should neglect no opportunity at this time of life to push

your fortune so far as an elegant competency, that you be not embarrassed with those kind of sollicitudes towards the evening of your day :

*Ne te semper inops agitet vexetque cupido,
Ne pavor, et rerum mediocriter utilium spes !*

I would have you acquire, if possible, what the world calls, with some propriety, an easy fortune ; and what I interpret, such a fortune as allows of some inaccuracy and inattention, that one may not be continually in suspense about the laying out a shilling. This kind of advice may seem extremely dogmatical in me ; but, if it carries any haughty air, I will obviate it by owning that I never acted as I say. I have lost my road to happiness, I confess ; and instead of pursuing the way to the fine lawns and venerable oaks which distinguish the region of it, I am got into the pitiful parterre-garden of amusement, and view the nobler scenes at a distance. I think I can see the road too that leads the better way, and can shew it others ; but I have many miles to measure back before I can get into it myself, and no kind of resolution to take a single step. My chief amusements at present are the same they have long been, and lie scattered about my farm. The French have what they call a *parque ornée* ; I suppose, approaching about as near to a garden as the park at Hagley. I give my place the title of a *ferme ornée* ; though, if I had money, I should hardly confine myself to such decorations as that name requires. I have made great improvements ; and the consequence is, that I long to have you see them.

I have not heard whether Miss —'s match proceeded.—I suppose your objections were grounded on the person's age and temper ; and that they had the less weight, as they supposed you acted indiscreetly yourself : I can say but little on the occasion. You know — better than I do. Only this I must add, that I have so great an esteem for your sister, that it will be necessary to my ease, that whoever marries her she should be happy.

I have little hopes that I shall now see you often in this country ; though it would be you, in all probability, as soon as any, that would take a journey of fifty miles,

“ To see the poorest of the sons of men.”

the truth is, my affairs are miserably embroiled, by my own negligence, and

the non-payment of tenants. I believe I shall be forced to seize on one next week for three years and a half's rent, due last Lady-day ; an affair to which I am greatly averse, both through indolence and compassion. I hope, however, I shall be always able (as I am sure I shall be desirous) to entertain a friend of a philosophical regimen, such as you and Mr. Whistler ; and that will be all I can do.

Hagley park is considerably improved since you were here, and they have built a castle by way of ruin on the highest part of it, which is just seen from my wood ; but by the removal of a tree or two (growing in a wood that joins to the park, and which, fortunately enough, belongs to Mr. Dolman and me) I believe it may be rendered a considerable object here.

I purpose to write to Mr. Whistler either this post or the next. The fears you seemed in upon my account are very kind, but have no grounds. I am, dear Mr.—, habitually and sincerely your, &c.

My humble service to your neighbours.
— Smith (whom you knew at Derby) will publish a print of my grove in a small collection.

LETTER XVII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago, with an Invitation to the Leasowes.

Sept. 3, Saturday night,
1748.

Dear Mr. Jago,

I HARDLY know whether it will be prudent in me to own, that I wrote you a long letter upon the receipt of your last, which I have now upon my table. I condemn this habit in myself entirely, and should, I am sure, be very unhappy, if my friends, by my example, should be induced to contract the same. The truth is, I had not expressed myself in it to my mind, and it was full of blots, and blunders, and interlinings ; yet, such as it was, it had wearied my attention, and given me disinclination to begin it afresh. I am now impatient to remove any scruple you may have concerning my grateful sense of all your favours, and the invariable continuance of my affection and esteem.—I find by your last obliging letter, that my machinations and devices are not entirely private.—You knew

of my draught of Hagley castle about the bigness of a barley-corn; you knew of our intended visit to lady Luxborough's; and I must add, Mr. Thomas Hall knew of my contrivance for the embellishment of Mr. Hardy's house. Nothing is there hid that shall not be revealed. Our visit to Barrels is now over and past. Lady Luxborough has seen Hagley castle in the original: and as to my desire that my draught might be shewn to no Christian soul, you surely did but ill comply with it, when you shewed that drawing to a clergyman. However, you may have acted up to my real meaning, if you have taken care not to shew it to any connoisseur. I meant chiefly to guard against any one that knows the rules; in whose eyes, I am sure, it could not turn to my credit. Pray how do you like the festoons dangling over the oval windows? It is the chief advantage in repairing an old house, that one may deviate from the rules without any extraordinary censure.

I will not trouble you now with many particulars. The intent of Tom's coming is, to desire your company and Mrs. Jago's this week. I should be extremely glad if your convenience would allow you to come on Monday or Tuesday; but if it is entirely impracticable, I would beseech you not to put off the visit longer than the Monday following, for the leaves of my groves begin to fall a great pace. I beg once more, you would let no small inconvenience prevent your being here on Monday. As to my visit to Icheneton, you may depend upon it soon after; and I hope you will not stand upon punctilio, when I mention my inclination that you may all take a walk through my coppices before their beauty is much impaired. Were I in a sprightly vein, I would aim at saying something genteel by way of answer to Mrs. Jago's compliment. As it is, I can only thank her for the substance, and applaud the politeness of it. I postpone all other matters till I see you. I am, habitually and sincerely, your, &c.

I beg my compliments to Mr. Hardy.

P. S. I am not accustomed, my dear friend, to send you a blank page; nor can I be content to do so now.

I thank you very sensibly for the verses with which you honour me. I think them good lines, and so do others that have seen them; but you will give me leave, when

I see you, to propose some little alteration. As to an epistle, it would be executed with difficulty, and I would have it turn to your credit as well as my own. But you have certainly of late acquired an ease in writing; and I am tempted to think, that what you write henceforth will be universally good. Persons that have seen your Elegies like "The Blackbirds" best, as it is most assuredly the most correct; but I, who pretend to great penetration, can foresee that "The Linnets" will be made to excel. More of this when I see you. Poor Miss G—, J— R— says, is married; and poor Mr. Thomson, Mr. Pitt tells me, is dead. He was to have been at Hagley this week, and then I should probably have seen him here. As it is, I will erect an urn in Virgil's Grove to his memory. I was really as much shocked to hear of his death, as if I had known and loved him for a number of years: God knows, I lean on a very few friends: and if they drop me, I become a wretched misanthrope.

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. Shenstone to a Friend, disappointing him of a Visit.

FIE on Mr. N—! he has disappointed me of the most seasonable visit that heart could wish or desire. My flowers in blossom, my walks newly cleaned, my neighbours invited, and I languishing for lack of your company! Mean time you are going to dance attendance on a courtier.—Would to God he may disappoint you! according to the usual practice of those gentlemen; I mean, by giving you a far better living than you ever expected.

I have no sooner made than I am ready to recall that wish, in order to, substitute another in its place; which is, that you may rather squat yourself down upon a fat goose living in Warwickshire, or one in Staffordshire, or perhaps Worcestershire, of the same denomination. I do not mention Shropshire, because I think I am more remote from the main body of that county than I am from either of the others. But, nevertheless, by all means wait on Mr. N—; shew him all respect, yet so as not to lay out any of the profits of your contingent living in a black velvet waistcoat and breeches to appear before him. True merit needeth nought of

this. Besides, peradventure, you may not receive the first quarter's income of it this half year. He will probably do something for you one time or other; but you shall never go into Ireland, that is certain, for less than a deanery; not for less than the deanery of St. Patrick's, if you take my advice. Lower your hopes only to advance your surprise, "*grata supervenient quæ non sperabimus.*" Come to me as you may. A week is elapsed since you began to be detained; you may surely come over in a fortnight now at farthest: I will be at home. However, write directly; you know our letters are long upon their journey. I expected you the beginning of every week, till I received your last letter, impatiently.

For my part, I begin to wean myself from all hopes and expectations whatever. I feed my wild-ducks, and I water my carnations; happy enough, if I could extinguish my ambition quite, or indulge (what I hope I feel in an equal degree) the desire of being something more beneficial in my sphere. Perhaps some few other circumstances would want also to be adjusted.

I have just read lord Bolingbroke's three Letters, which I like as much as most pieces of politics I ever read. I admire, especially, the spirit of the style. I as much admire the editor's unpopular preface. I know the family hitherto seemed to make it a point to conceal Pope's affair; and now, the editor, under lord B.'s inspection, not only relates, but invites people to think the worst of it. What collateral reasons my lord may have for thinking ill of Mr. Pope, I cannot say; but surely it is not political to lessen a person's character that had done one so much honour. I am, dear sir, your, &c.

I have this moment received a long letter from lady Luxborough; and you are to look on all I said concerning both lord Bolingbroke's affair and her resentment as premature. My lady's daughter and son-in-law visit her next week.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

From the Leasowes, as it appears on a rainy evening, June 1749.

Dear sir,

It would probably be so long before you can receive this letter by the post, that I

cannot think of subjecting my thanks for your last, or my hopes of seeing you soon, to such an uncertainty. I shall now have it in my power to meet you at Mr. Wren's immediately, so would lose no time in requesting your company here next week, if you please. I hope Mrs. Jago also will accompany you, and that you will set out the first day of the week, even Monday; that you may not leave me in less than six days' time, under a pretence of necessity. As to the verses you were so kind to convey, I will take occasion, when you come,

—"To find out, like a friend,
Something to blame, and mickle to commend."

So I say no more at present on that head.

I love to read verses, but I write none. "*Peti, nihil me sicut ante juvat scribere!*" I will not say none; for I wrote the following at breakfast yesterday, and they are all I have wrote since I saw you. They are now in one of the root-houses of Virgil's Grove, for the admonition of my good friends the vulgar; of whom I have multitudes every Sunday evening, and who very fortunately believe in fairies, and are no judges of poetry.

"Here in cool grot, and mossy cell,
We tripping fauns and fairies dwell:
Though rarely seen by mortal eye,
Oft as the moon, ascended high,
Darts through yon limes her quiv'ring beam,
We frisk it near this crystal stream.

"Then fear to spoil these sacred bow'rs;
Nor wound the shrubs, nor crop the flow'rs:
So may your path with sweets abound,
So may your couch with rest be crown'd!
But ill betide or nymph or swain,
Who dares these hallow'd haunts profane."

OBERON.

I suppose the rotund at Hagley is completed; but I have not seen it hitherto; neither do I often journey or visit any where, except when a shrub or flower is upon the point of blossoming near my walks. I forget one visit I lately made in the neighbourhood, to a young clergyman of taste and ingenuity. His name is Pixell; he plays finely upon the violin, and very well upon the harpsichord; has set many things to music, some in the soft way, with which I was much delighted. He is young, and has time to improve himself. He gave me an opportunity of being acquainted with him by frequently visiting, and introducing com-

pany to my walks. I met him one morning with an Italian in my grove, and our acquaintance has been growing ever since. He has a share in an estate that is near me, and lives there at present; but I doubt will not do so long; when you come, I will send for him. Have you read my lord Bolingbroke's *Essays on Patriotism*, &c.? and have you read *Merope*? and do you take in the *Magazin des Londres*? and pray how does your garden flourish? I warrant you do not yet know the difference betwixt a ranunculus and an anemone—God help ye! Come to me, and be informed of the nature of all plants, “from the cedar on Mount Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.” Pray do not fail to decorate your new garden, whence you may transplant all kinds of flowers into your verses. If by chance you make a visit at I—— fifty years hence, from some distant part of England, shall you forget this little angle where you used to muse and sing? “*En unquam, &c. Post aliquot, tua regna videns mirabere, aristas.*”

I expect by the return of Tom to receive a trifle that will amuse you. It is a small gold seal of Vida's head, given by Vertue to a relation of mine, who published Vida, and introduced Vertue into business. Perhaps you remember Mr. Tristram of Hampton, and the day we spent there from school; it was his. I am, very cordially, yours.

LETTER XX.

Mr. Shenstone to C——W——, Esq.

The Leasowes, Nov. 2, 1753.

Dear sir,

It never can be that I owe you for three letters: as to two, I will agree with you; one that I received together with my books, and the other soon after; but that I am indebted for more than these—

*Credat Judeus Apella,
Non ego.*

Even that same *Judeus Apella* who affords me this very opportunity of sending my compliments to you and Mrs. W—, and of assuring you that if I had not purposed to have seen you, I had wrote to you long ago.

Master Harris talks very respectfully of your garden; and we have no dispute, save only in one point—he says, that you labour very hard in your vocation: whereas I am not willing to allow that

all the work you ever did, or will do in it, is worth a single bunch of radishes. However, I dare not contradict him too much, because he waits for my letter.

How happy are you that can hold up your spade, and cry, “*Avaunt, Satan!*” when a toyman offers you his deceitful vanities! Do not you rejoice inwardly, and pride yourself greatly in your own philosophy?

“*Twas thus—*

The wise Athenian cross'd a glitt'ring fair:
Unmov'd by tongues and sights he walk'd the
place,
Through tape, tags, tinsel, gimp, perfume, and
lace;
Then bends from Mars's Hill his awful eyes.
And, ‘What a world I never want!’ he cries.”

PARNELL.

Meantime do not despise others that can find any needful amusement in what, I think, Bunyan very aptly calls *Vanity Fair*; I have been at it many times this season, and have bought many kinds of merchandise there. It is a part of philosophy, to adapt one's passions to one's way of life; and the solitary unsocial sphere in which I move makes me think it happy that I can retain a relish for such trifles as I can draw into it. Meantime, I dare not reason too much upon this head. Reason, like the famous concave mirror at Paris, would in two minutes vitrify all the Jew's Pack: I mean, that it would immediately destroy all the form, colour, and beauty, of every thing that is not merely useful. But I ramble too far, and you do not want such speculations. My intent, when I sat down, was to tell you that I shall probably see you very soon, and certainly remain in the mean time, and at all times, sir, your, &c.

LETTER XXI.

*Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on the
Death of Mr. Shenstone's Brother.*

The Leasowes, Feb. 14, 1752.

Dear Mr. Graves,

You will be amazed at my long silence; and it might reasonably excite some disgust, if my days had passed of late in the manner they used to do: but I am not the man I was; perhaps I never shall be. Alas! my dearest friend! I have lost my only brother! and, since the fatal close of November, I have had neither peace nor respite from agonizing thoughts!

You, I think, have seen my brother;

but perhaps had no opportunity of distinguishing him from the group of others whom we called good-natured men. This part of his character was so visible in his countenance, that he was generally beloved at sight: I, who must be allowed to know him, do assure you, that his understanding was no way inferior to his benevolence. He had not only a sound judgment, but a lively wit and genuine humour. As these were many times eclipsed by his native bashfulness, so his benevolence only suffered by being shewn to an excess. I here mean his giving too indiscriminately into those jovial meetings of company, where the warmth of a social temper is discovered with least reserve; but the virtues of his head and heart would soon have shone without alloy. The foibles of his youth were wearing off; and his affection for me and regard to my advice, with his own good sense, would soon have rendered him all that I could have wished in a successor. I never in my life knew a person more sincere in the expression of his love or dislike. But it was the former that suited the propensity of his heart; the latter was as transient as the starts of passion that occasioned it. In short, with much true genius and real fortitude, he was, according to the English acceptance, "a truly honest man;" and I think I may also add, a truly English character; but "*Habeo, dixi? immo habui fratrem et amicum, Chreme!*" All this have I lost in him. He is now in regard to this world no more than a mere idea; and this idea, therefore, though deeply tinged with melancholy, I must, and surely ought to, cherish and preserve.

I believe I wrote you some account of his illness last spring; from which to all appearance he was tolerably well recovered. He took the air, and visited about with me, during the warmer months of summer; but my pleasure was of short duration. "*Hæsit lateri lethalis arundo!*" The peripneumony under which he laboured in the spring had terminated in an adhesion of the lungs to the pleura, so that he could never lie but upon his right side; and this, as the weather grew colder, occasioned an obstruction that could never be surmounted.

Though my reason forewarned me of the event, I was not the more prepared for it. Let me not dwell upon it. It is

altogether insupportable in every respect, and my imagination seems more assiduous in educing pain from this occasion, than I ever yet found it in administering to my pleasure. This hurts me to no purpose—I know it; and yet, when I have avocated my thoughts, and fixed them for a while upon common amusements, I suffer the same sort of consciousness as if I were guilty of a crime. Believe me, this has been the most sensible affliction I ever felt in my life; and you, who know my anxiety when I had far less reason to complain, will more easily conceive it now, than I am able to describe it.

I cannot pretend to fill up my paper with my usual subjects. I should thank you for your remarks upon my poetry; but I despise poetry: and I might tell you of all my little rural improvements; but I hate them. What can I now expect from my solitary rambles through them, but a series of melancholy reflections and irksome anticipations? Even the pleasure I should take in showing them to you, the greatest they can afford me, must be now greatly inferior to what it might formerly have been.

How have I prostituted my sorrow on occasions that little concerned me! I am ashamed to think of that idle "Elegy upon Autumn," when I have so much more important cause to hate and to condemn it now: but the glare and gaiety of the spring is what I principally dread; when I shall find all things restored but my poor brother, and something like those lines of Milton will run for ever in my thoughts:

"Thus, with the year,
Seasons return; but not to me returns
A brother's cordial smile, at eve or morn."

I shall then seem to wake from amusements, company, every sort of inebriation with which I have been endeavouring to lull my grief asleep, as from a dream; and I shall feel as if I were, that instant, despoiled of all I have chiefly valued for thirty years together; of all my present happiness, and all my future prospects. The melody of birds, which he no more must hear; the cheerful beams of the sun, of which he no more must partake; every wonted pleasure will produce that sort of pain to which my temper is most obnoxious. Do not consider this as poetry. Poetry on such occasions is no

more than literal truth. In the present case it is less; for half the tenderness I feel is altogether shapeless and inexpressible.

After all, the wisdom of the world may perhaps esteem me a gainer. Ill do they judge of this event, who think that any shadow of amends can be made for the death of a brother, and the disappointment of all my schemes, by the accession of some fortune, which I never can enjoy!

This is a mournful narrative: I will not, therefore, enlarge it. Amongst all changes and chances, I often think of you; and pray there may be no suspicion or jealousy betwixt us during the rest of our lives. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Shenstone to C— W—, Esq.

July 22, 1752.

Dear Mr. W—,

I do not know why I made you a promise of a pretty long letter. What I now write will be but a moderate one, both in regard to length and style; yet write I must, *par maniere d'acquit*, and you have brought fourpence expense upon yourself for a parcel of nonsense, and to no manner of purpose. This is not tautology, you must observe; for nonsense sometimes answers very considerable purposes. In love, it is eloquence itself. In friendship, therefore, by all the rules of sound logic, you must allow it to be something; what, I cannot say, "*nequeo monstrare, et sentio tantum*." The principal part of a correspondence betwixt two idle men consists in two important inquiries—what we do, and how we do: but as all persons ought to give satisfaction before they expect to receive it, I am to tell you in the first place, that my own health is tolerably good, or rather what I must call good, being, I think, much better than it has been this last half year. Then as touching my occupation, alas! "*Othello's occupation's gone*." I neither read nor write aught besides a few letters; and I give myself up entirely to scenes of dissipation; lounge at my lord Dudley's for near a week together; make dinners; accept of invitations; sit up till three o'clock in the morning with young sprightly

married women, over white port and *vin de paysans*; ramble over my fields; issue out orders to my hay-makers; foretell rain and fair weather; enjoy the fragrance of hay, the cocks, and the windrows; admire that universal lawn which is produced by the scythe; sometimes inspect and draw mouldings for my carpenters; sometimes paper my walls, and at other times my ceilings; do every social office that falls in my way, but never seek out for any.

"*Sed vos quid tandem? quæ circumvolitas agilis thyma? non tu corpus eras sine pectore. Non tibi parvum ingenium, non incultum est!*" In short, what do you? and how do you do?—that is all.

Tell my young pupil, your son, he must by all manner of means send me a Latin letter: and if he have any billet in French for Miss Lea at The Grange, or even in Hebrew, Coptic, or Syriac, I will engage it shall be received very graciously. Thither am I going to dinner this day; and there "*implebor veteris Bacchi, pinguisque ferina*

All this looks like extreme jollity; but is this the true state of the case, or may I not more properly apply the

"*Spem vultu simulat, premit atrum corde dolorem?*"

Accept this scrawl in place of a letter, and believe me yours, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. G—, on the Receipt of his Picture.

The Leasowes, Oct. 3, 1752.

Dear Mr. G—,

I AM very unfeignedly ashamed to reflect how long it is since I received your present, and how much longer it is since I received your letter. I have been resolving to write to you almost daily ever since you left me; yet have foolishly enough permitted avocations (of infinitely less importance than your correspondence) to interfere with my gratitude, my interest, and my inclination. What apology I have to make, though no way adequate to my negligence, is in short as follows. After the receipt of your letter, I deferred writing till I could speak of the arrival of your picture. This did not happen till about a month or five weeks ago, when I was embar-

rassed with masons, carvers, carpenters, and company, all at a time. And though it were idle enough to say, that I could not find one vacant hour for my purpose, yet in truth my head was so confused by these multifarious distractions, that I could have written nothing satisfactory either to myself or you; nothing worth a single penny, supposing the postage were to cost you no more. The workmen had not finished my rooms a minute, when lady Luxborough, Mrs. Davies, and Mr. Outing arrived, with five servants and a set of horses, to stay with me for some time. After a nine days' visit, I returned with them to Barrels, where I continued for a week; and whither (by the way) I go again with lord Dudley in about a fortnight's time. Other company filled up the interstices of my summer; and I hope my dear friend will accept of this apology for so long a chasm of silence, during which I have been uniformly at his service, and true to that inviolable friendship I shall ever bear him.

I proceed now to thank you for the distinction you shew me, in sending me your picture: I do it very sincerely. It is assuredly a strong likeness, as my lady Luxborough with all her servants, that have seen you, pronounce, as well as I; consequently more valuable to a friend than a face he does not know, though it were one of Raphael's. The smile about the mouth is bad; as it agrees but ill with the gravity of the eyes, and as a smile ever so little *outré* has a bad effect in a picture where it is constant, though it may be ever so graceful in a person where it is transitory. However, this may be altered, when I can meet with a good painter. I have no other objection, but to the prominence of the belly. The hair, I think, is good; and the coat and hand no way exceptionable. I have given it all the advantage I can: it has a good light, and makes part of an elegant chimney-piece in a genteel, though little breakfast room, at the end of my house.

Mr. Whistler and I are now upon terms, and two or three friendly letters have been interchanged betwixt us. He presses me to come to Whitechurch, and I him to come over to the Leasowes; but the winter cometh, when no man can visit. The dispute is adjusted by time, whilst we are arguing it by expostulation

—no uncommon event in most sublimary projects!

Lady Luxborough said very extraordinary things in praise of Mrs. G—, after you left us at Barrels: yet I sincerely believe no more than she deserves. I took the liberty of shewing her your letter here, as it included a compliment to her which I thought particularly genteel—She will always consider you as a person of genius, and her friend.

During most of this summer (wherein I have seen much company either here or at lord Dudley's), I have been almost constantly engaged in one continued scene of jollity. I endeavoured to find relief from such sort of dissipation; and, when I had once given in to it, I was obliged to proceed; as, they say, is the case when persons disguise their faces with paint. Mine was a sort of painting applied to my temper—" *Spem vultu simulare, premere atrum corde dolorem.*" And the moment I left it off, my soul appeared again all haggard and forlorn. My company has now deserted me; the spleen-fogs begin to rise; and the terrible incidents of last winter revive apace in my memory. This is my state of mind, while I write you these few lines; yet, I thank God, my health is not much amiss.

I did not forget my promise of a box, &c. to Mrs. G—. I had a dozen sent me, one or two of which I could have liked, had they been better finished. They were of good oval, white enamel, with flowers, &c.; but horridly gilt, and not accurately painted. I beg my best service to her, and will make a fresh essay. My dearest friend, accept this awkward letter for the present. In a few posts I will write again. Believe me yours from the bottom of my soul.

I will send you a label for made wine, after my own plan. It is enamel, with grapes, shepherd's pipe, &c. The motto "*Vin de Paisan.*"

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

The Leasowes, Nov. 15, 1752.

Dear Mr. Jago,
COULD I with convenience mount my horse, and ride to Harbury this instant,

I should much more willingly do so than begin this letter. Such terrible events have happened to us, since we saw each other last, that, however irksome it may be to dwell upon them, it is in the same degree unnatural to substitute any subject in their place.

I do sincerely forgive your long silence, my good friend, indeed I do; though it gave me uneasiness. I hope you do the same by mine. I own, I could not readily account for the former period of yours, any otherwise than by supposing that I had said or done something in the levity of my heart, which had given you disgust; but being conscious to myself of the most sincere regard for you, and believing it could never be discredited for any trivial inadvertencies, I remember, I continued still in expectation of a letter, and did not dream of writing till such time as I had received one. I trusted you would write at last; and that by all my past endeavours to demonstrate my friendship, you would believe the tree was rooted in my heart, whatever irregularity you might observe in the branches.

This was my situation before that dreadful æra which gave me such a shock as to banish my best friends for a time out of my memory. And when they recurred, as they did the first of any thing, I was made acquainted with that deplorable misfortune of yours. Believe me, I sympathized in your affliction, notwithstanding my own; but alas! what comfort could I administer, who had need of every possible assistance to support myself? I wrote indeed a few letters with difficulty; amongst the rest, one to my friend Graves; but it was to vent my complaint. I will send you the letter, if you please, as it is by far my least painful method of conveying you some account of my situation. Let it convince you, that I could have written nothing at that time, which could have been of any service to you: let it afford you at least a faint sketch of my dearest brother's character; but let it not appear an ostentatious display of sorrow, of which I am by no means guilty. I know but too well that I discovered upon the occasion, what some would call an unmanly tenderness; but I know also, that sorrow upon such subjects as these is very consistent with virtue, and with the most absolute resignation to the just decrees

of Providence—" *Hominis est enim affici dolore, sentire; resistere tamen et solatia admittere, non solatiis non egere*" (Pliny). I drank, purchased amusements, never suffered myself to be a minute without company, no matter what, so it was continual. At length, by an attention to such conversation and such amusements as I could at other times despise, I forgot so far as to be cheerful. And after this, the summer, through an almost constant succession of lively and agreeable visitants, proved even a scene of jollity. It was inebriation all, though of a mingled nature; yet has it maintained a sort of truce with grief, till time can assist me more effectually by throwing back the event to a distance. Now, indeed, that my company has all forsaken me, and I am delivered up to winter, silence, and reflection, the incidents of the last year revive apace in my memory; and I am even astonished to think of the gaiety of my summer. The fatal anniversary, the "*dies quem semper acerbum*," &c. is beginning to approach, and every face of the sky suggests the ideas of last winter. Yet I find myself cheerful in company; nor would I recommend it to you to be much alone. You would lay the highest obligation upon me by coming over at this time. I pressed your brother, whom I saw at Birmingham, to use his influence with you; but if you can by no means undertake the journey, I will take my speediest opportunity of seeing you at Harbury. Mr. Miller invited me strenuously to meet Dr. Lyttelton at his house; but I believe my most convenient season will be, when my lord Dudley goes to Barrels; for I can but ill bear the pensiveness of a long and lonely expedition. After all, if you could come hither first, it would afford me the most entire satisfaction. I have been making alterations in my house that would amuse you; and have many matters to discourse with you, which would be endless to mention upon paper. Adieu! my dear friend! May your merit be known to some one who has greater power to serve you than myself; but be assured, at the same time, that no one loves you better, or esteems you more.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

The Leasowes, Feb. 27. 1753.

Dear Mr. Jago,

I WROTE you some account of myself, and inclosed some trivial criticisms, in a letter I sent you about a fortnight ago, which I hope you have received.—Tom comes now to inquire after your health, and to bring back my “Ode to Colonel Lyttleton;” in regard to which, I desire that you will not be sparing of your animadversions. I whispered my difficulties to Mr. Miller at Hagley, how delicate I found the subject, and how hard it was to satisfy either myself or others; in all which points he agreed with me. Nevertheless, having twice broken my promise of sending a corrected copy to sir George, I was obliged to make my peace by a fresh one, which, I suppose, I must of necessity perform.—Give me your whole sentiments hereupon, I beseech you: in particular and in general, as a critic and as a friend.—The bad state of spirits which I complained of in my last, for a long time together made me utterly irresolute: every thing occasioned me suspense; and I did nothing with appetite.—This was owing in a great measure to a slow nervous fever, as I have since discovered by many concurrent symptoms. It is now, I think, wearing off by degrees. I seem to anticipate a little of that “vernal delight” which Milton mentions, and thinks

“able to chase
All sadness, but despair.”

At least, I began to resume my silly clue of hopes and expectations: which I know, however, will not guide me to any thing more satisfactory than before.

I have read scarce any new books this season. Voltaire’s new tragedy was sent me from London; but what has given me the most amusement has been the “*Lettres de Madame de Maintenon*.” You have probably read them already in English, and then I need not recommend them. The “*Life of Lord Bolingbroke*” is entirely his public life, and the book three parts filled with political remarks.

As to writing, I have not attempted it this year and more; nor do I know when I shall again. However, I would be glad to correct that “Ode to the

Duchess of Somerset,” when once I can find in whose hands it is deposited. I was shewn a very elegant letter of hers, the other day; wherein she asks for it with great politeness; and as it includes nothing but a love of rural life, and such sort of amusements as she herself approves, I shall stand a good chance of having it received with partiality. She lives the life of a *religieuse*. She has written my lady Luxborough a very serious letter of condolence upon the misfortune in her family; and need enough has lady Luxborough of so unchangeable a friend; for sure nothing could have happened to a person in her situation more specifically unfortunate. Mr. Reynolds has been at Barrels, I hear, and has brought her a machine that goes into a coat-pocket, yet answers the end of “a jack for boots, a reading-desk, a cribbage-board, a pair of snuffers, a ruler, an eighteen-inch rule, three pair of nut-cracks, a lemon-squeezer, two candle-sticks, a picquet-board, and the lord knows what beside.” Can you form an idea of it? If you can, do you not think it must give me pain to reflect, that I myself am useful for no sort of purpose, when a paltry bit of wood can answer so many? But, indeed, whilst it pretends to these exploits, it performs nothing well; and therein I agree with it. So true it is, with regard to me, what I told you long ago,

*Multa et præclara minantem
Vivere nec recte, nec s'aviter!*

We have a turnpike-bill upon the point of being brought into the House of Commons; it will convey you about half the way betwixt Birmingham and Hales, and from thence to Hagley; but, I trust, there will be a left-hand attraction, which will always make you deviate from the straight line.

I should be ashamed to reflect how much I have dwelt upon myself in this letter, but that I seriously approve of egotism in letters; and were I not to do so, I should not have any other subject. I have not a single neighbour, that is either fraught with politeness, literature, or intelligence; much less have I a tide of spirits to set my invention afloat: but the less I am able to amuse you, the more desirous am I of your letters; which afford me the truest entertainment, even when my spirits are ever so much depressed.

That universal cheerfulness, which is the lot of some people, persons that you and I may envy at the same time that we despise, is worth all that either fortune or nature can bestow.

I am, with entire affection, yours.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on the Death of Mr. Whistler.

The Leasowes, June 7, 1754.

Dear Mr. Graves,

THE melancholy account of our dear friend Whistler's death was conveyed to me, at the same instant, by yours and by his brother's letter. I have written to his brother this post; though I am very ill able to write upon the subject, and would willingly have waved it longer, but for decency. The triumvirate, which was the greatest happiness and the greatest pride of my life, is broken! The fabric of an ingenuous and disinterested friendship has lost a noble column! yet it may, and will, I trust, endure till one of us be laid as low. In truth, one can so little satisfy one's self with what we say upon such sad occasions, that I made three or four essays before I could endure what I had written to his brother. Be so good as excuse me to him as well as you can, and establish me in the good opinion of him and Mr. Walker.

Poor Mr. Whistler! how do all our little strifes and bickerments appear to us at this time! Yet we may with comfort reflect, that they were not of a sort that touched the vitals of our friendship; and I may say, that we fondly loved and esteemed each other, of necessity—" *Tales animas oportuit esse concordēs.*" Poor Mr. Whistler! not a single acquaintance have I made, not a single picture or curiosity have I purchased, not a single embellishment have I given to my place, since he was last here, but I have had his approbation and his amusement in my eye. I will assuredly inscribe my larger urn to his memory; nor shall I pass it without a pleasing melancholy during the remainder of my days. We have each of us received a pleasure from his conversation, which no other conversation can afford us at our present time of life.

Adieu! my dear friend! may our remembrance of the person we have lost be the strong and everlasting cement of our

affection! Assure Mr. John Whistler of the regard I have for him, upon his own account, as well as his brother's. Write to me; directly if you have opportunity. Whether you have or no, believe me to be ever most affectionately yours.

I beg my compliments to Mrs. Graves.

LETTER XXVII.

From the same to the same, on hearing that his Letters to Mr. Whistler were destroyed.

The Leasowes, Oct. 23, 1754.

Dear Mr. Graves,

IT is certainly some argument of a peculiarity in the esteem I bear you, that I feel a readiness to acquaint you with more of my foibles than I care to trust with any other person. I believe nothing shews us more plainly either the different degrees or kinds of regard that we entertain for our several friends (I may also add the difference of their characters), than the ordinary style and tenor of the letters we address to them.

I confess to you, that I am considerably mortified by Mr. John W——'s conduct in regard to my letters to his brother; and, rather than they should have been so unnecessarily destroyed, would have given more money than it is allowable for me to mention with decency. I look upon my letters as some of my *chef-d'œuvres*; and, could I be supposed to have the least pretensions to propriety of style or sentiment, I should imagine it must appear principally in my letters to his brother, and one or two more friends. I considered them as the records of a friendship that will be always dear to me, and as the history of my mind for these twenty years last past. The amusement I should have found in the perusal of them would have been altogether innocent; and I would gladly have preserved them, if it were only to explain those which I shall preserve of his brother's. Why he should allow either me or them so very little weight as not to consult me with regard to them, I can by no means conceive. I suppose it is not uncustomary to return them to the surviving friend. I had no answer to the letter which I wrote Mr. J. W——. I received a ring from him; but as I thought it an inadequate memorial of the friendship which his brother had for me, I gave

it to my servant the moment I received it; at the same time I have a neat standish, on which I caused the lines Mr. W—— left with it to be inscribed, and which appears to be a much more agreeable remembrancer.

I have read your new production with pleasure; and as this letter begins with a confession of foibles, I will own, that through mere laziness I have sent you back your copy in which I have made some erasements, instead of giving you my reasons on which those erasements were founded. Truth is, it seems to me to want mighty few variations from what is now the present text; and that, upon one more perusal, you will be able to give it as much perfection as you mean it to have. And yet, did I suppose you would insert it in Dodsley's Collection, as I see no reason you have to the contrary, I would take any pains about it that you would desire me. I must beg another copy, at your leisure.

I should like the inscription you mention upon a real stone urn, which you purchase very reasonable at Bath: but you must not risque it upon the vase you mention, on any account whatever.

Now I mention Bath, I must acquaint you, that I have received intelligence from the younger Dodsley, that his brother is now there, and that none of the papers I sent him are yet sent to press; that he expects his brother home about the fourth or fifth of November, when he proceeds with his publication. Possibly you may go to Bath whilst he is there, and, if so, may choose to have an interview.

I shall send two or three little pieces of my own, in hopes that you will adjust the reading, and return them as soon as you conveniently can. All I can send to-night is this "Ode to Memory." I shall in the last place desire your opinion as to the manner of placing what is sent. The first pages of his Miscellany must be already fixed. I think to propose ours for the last; but as to the order, it will depend entirely upon you.

Adieu! in other words, God bless you. I have company at the table all the time I am writing. Your ever most affectionate, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, Nov. 14, 1735.

You use me very cruelly: you have sent me but one letter since I have been at Oxford, and that too agreeable not to make me sensible how great my loss is in not having more. Next to seeing you is the pleasure of seeing your handwriting: next to hearing you is the pleasure of hearing from you. Really and sincerely I wonder at you, that you thought it not worth while to answer my last letter. I hope this will have better success in behalf of your *quondam* school-fellow; in behalf of one who has walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

Thro' many a flowery path and shelly grot,
Where learning lull'd us in her private maze.

The very thought, you see, tips my pen with poetry, and brings Eton to my view. Consider me very seriously here in a strange country, inhabited by things that call themselves Doctors and Masters of Arts; a country flowing with syllogisms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown; consider me, I say, in this melancholy light, and then think if something be not due to yours, &c.

P. S: I desire you will send me soon, and truly and positively, *a history of your own time.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

Cambridge, May 8, 1736.

PERMIT me again to write to you, though I have so long neglected my duty; and forgive my brevity, when I tell you it is occasioned wholly by the hurry I am in to get to a place where I expect to meet with no other pleasure than the sight of you; for I am preparing for London in a few days at furthest. I do not wonder in the least at your frequent blaming my indolence, it ought rather to be called ingratitude, and I am obliged to your goodness for softening so harsh an appellation. When we meet, it will, however, be my greatest of pleasures to know what you do, what you read, and how you spend your time, &c. &c., and to tell you what I do not read, and how I do not, &c.; for

* Alluding to his grandfather's history.

almost all the employment of my hours may be best explained by negatives ; take my word and experience upon it, doing nothing is a most amusing business ; and yet neither something nor nothing gives me any pleasure. When you have seen one of my days, you have seen a whole year of my life ; they go round and round like the blind horse in the mill ; only he has the satisfaction of fancying he makes a progress, and gets some ground ; my eyes are open enough to see the same dull prospect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty steps more, I shall be just where I was ; I may, better than most people, say my life is but a span, were I not afraid lest you should not believe that a person so short-lived could write even so long a letter as this ; in short, I believe I must not send you the history of my own time, till I can send you that also of the Reformation*. However, as the most undeserving people in the world must sure have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being pleased that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there : it is asking you to an old play, indeed ; but you will be candid enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines.

For this little while past I have been playing with Statius : we yesterday had a game of quoits together ; you will easily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I send you my translation†, which I did not engage in because I liked that part of the poem, nor do I now send it to you because I think it deserves it, but merely to shew you how I mispend my days.

Third in the labours of the Disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon ;
Artful and strong he pois'd the well-known weight,

By Phlegyas warn'd, and fir'd by Mnesticus' fate,

That to avoid, and this to emulate.

His vigorous arm he try'd before he flung,
Brac'd all his nerves, and every sinew strung ;
Then with a tempest's whirl and wary eye,
Pursu'd his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high ;

* Carrying on the allusion to the other History, written by Mr. West's grandfather.

† This consisted of about 110 lines, which were sent separately ; and as it was Mr. Gray's first attempt in English verse, it is a curiosity not to be entirely withheld from the reader.

The orb on high tenacious of its course,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory.

The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall ;

The pond'rous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,

While vales, and woods, and echoing hills rebound.

As when from Ætna's smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heav'd the craggy rock ;
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar,
And parting surges round the vessel roar ;

'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses scap'd his giant arm.

A tiger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay ;
A shining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold, &c.

LETTER XXX.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, May 24, 1736.

I AGREE with you that you have broke Statius's head, but it is in like manner as Apollo broke Hyacinth's, you have foiled him infinitely at his own weapon : I must insist on seeing the rest of your translation, and then I will examine it entire, and compare it with the Latin, and be very wise and severe, and put on an inflexible face, such as becomes the character of a true son of Aristarchus, of hypercritical memory. In the mean while,

And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold is exactly Statius—*Summos auro mansueverat unguis*. I never knew before that the golden fangs on hammer-cloths were so old a fashion. Your "Hymeneal"‡ I was told was the best in the Cambridge Collection before I saw it, and indeed it is no great compliment to tell you I thought so when I had seen it, but sincerely it pleased me best. Methinks the college bards have run into a strange taste on this occasion. Such soft unmeaning stuff about Venus and Cupid, and Pelus and Thetis, and Zephyrs and Dryads, was never read. As for my poor little Eclogue, it has been condemned and beleaded by our Westminster judges ; an exordium of about sixteen lines absolutely cut off, and its other limbs quartered in a most barbarous manner. I will send it you in my next as my true and lawful heir, in exclusion of the pretender,

‡ Published in the Cambridge Collection of Verses on the Prince of Wales's Marriage.

who has the impudence to appear under my name.

As yet I have not looked into Sir Isaac. Public disputations I hate; mathematics I reverence; history, morality, and natural philosophy, have the greatest charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? They call it idleness, but it is surely the most enchanting thing in the world, "*ac dulce otium et pæne omni negotio pulchrius.*" I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

Peterhouse, Dec. 1736.

You must know that I do not take degrees, and after this term, shall have nothing more of college impertinencies to undergo, which I trust will be some pleasure to you, as it is a great one to me. I have endured lectures daily and hourly since I came last, supported by the hopes of being shortly at full liberty to give myself up to my friends and classical companions, who, poor souls! though I see them fallen into great contempt with most people here, yet I cannot help sticking to them, and out of a spirit of obstinacy (I think) love them the better for it; and indeed, what can I do else? Must I plunge into metaphysics? Alas! I cannot see in the dark; nature has not furnished me with the optics of a cat. Must I pore upon mathematics? Alas! I cannot see in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very possible that two and two make four, but I would not give four farthings to demonstrate this ever so clearly; and if these be the profits of life, give me the amusements of it. The people I behold all around me, it seems, know all this and more, and yet I do not know one of them who inspires me with any ambition of being like him. Surely it was of this place (now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon), that the Prophet spoke when he said, "the wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall build there, and satyrs shall dance there; their forts and towers shall be a den for ever, a joy of wild asses; there shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch and gather under her shadow; it shall be a court of dragons; the screech-owl also

shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest." You see here is a pretty collection of desolate animals, which is verified in this town to a tittle; and perhaps it may also allude to your habitation, for you know all types may be taken by abundance of handles: however, I defy your owls to match mine.

If the default of your spirits and nerves be nothing but the effect of the hyp, I have no more to say. We all must submit to that wayward queen; I too in no small degree own her sway:

I feel her influence while I speak her power.

But if it be a real distemper, pray take more care of your health, if not for your own, at least for our sakes, and do not be so soon weary of this little world: I do not know what refined friendships you may have contracted in the other, but pray do not be in a hurry to see your acquaintance above; among your terrestrial familiars, however, though I say it that should not say it, there positively is not one that has a greater esteem for you than yours most sincerely, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, Dec. 22, 1736.

I CONGRATULATE you on your being about to leave college, and rejoice much you carry no degrees with you. For I would not have you dignified, and I not, for the world; you would have insulted me so. My eyes, such as they are, like yours, are neither metaphysical nor mathematical; I have, nevertheless, a great respect for your connoisseurs that way, but am always contented to be their humble admirer. Your collection of desolate animals pleased me much; but Oxford, I can assure you, has her owls that match yours, and the prophecy has certainly a squint that way. Well, you are leaving this dismal land of bondage; and which way are you turning your face? Your friends, indeed, may be happy in you; but what will you do with your classic companions? An inn of court is as horrid a place as a college, and a moot case is as dear to gentle dulness as a syllogism. But wherever you go, let me beg you not to throw poetry "like a nauseous weed away;" cherish its sweets in your bosom, they will serve you now and then to correct the disgusting sober

follies of the common law: *misce stultitiam consiliis brevem; dulce est desipere in loco*; so said Horace to Virgil, those two sons of Anac in poetry, and so say I to you, in this degenerate land of pigmies,

Mix with your grave designs a little pleasure,
Each day of business has its hour of leisure.

In one of these hours, I hope, dear sir, you will sometimes think of me, write to me, and know me yours,

Ἐξασθα, μὴ κούθε ἄλλω, ἵνα εἰδομεν ἄμφω,

that is, write freely to me and openly, as I do to you; and to give you a proof of it I have sent you an elegy of Tibullus translated. Tibullus, you must know, is my favourite elegiac poet; for his language is more elegant and his thoughts more natural than Ovid's. Ovid excels him only in wit, of which no poet had more in my opinion. The reason I choose so melancholy a kind of poesie, is because my low spirits and constant ill health (things in me not imaginary, as you surmise, but too real, alas! and I fear, constitutional) "have tun'd my heart to elegies of woe;" and this likewise is the reason why I am the most irregular thing alive at college, for you may depend upon it I value my health above what they call discipline. As for this poor unlicked thing of an elegy, pray criticise it unmercifully, for I send it with that intent. Indeed your late translation of Statius might have deterred me; but I know you are not more able to excel others, than you are apt to forgive the want of excellence, especially when it is found in the productions of your most sincere friend.

LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Peterhouse, Dec. 23, 1736.

You can never weary me with the repetition of any thing that makes me sensible of your kindness; since that has been the only idea of any social happiness that I have almost ever received, and which (begging your pardon for thinking so differently from you in such cases) I would by no means have parted with for an exemption from all the uneasinesses mixed with it: but it would be unjust to imagine my taste was any rule for yours; for which reason my letters are shorter and less frequent than

they would be, had I any materials but myself to entertain you with. Love and brown sugar must be a poor regale for one of your *gout*: and, alas! you know I am by trade a grocer*. Scandal (if I had any) is a merchandise you do not profess dealing in; now and then, indeed, and to oblige a friend, you may perhaps slip a little out of your pocket, as a decayed gentlewoman would a piece of right Mecklin, or a little quantity of run tea, but this only now and then, not to make a practice of it. Monsters appertaining to this climate you have seen already, both wet and dry. So you perceive within how narrow bounds my pen is circumscribed, and the whole contents of my share in our correspondence may be reduced under the two heads of, 1st, You; 2dly, I: the first is, indeed, a subject to expatiate upon, but you might laugh at me for talking about what I do not understand; the second is so tiny, so tiresome, that you shall hear no more of it than that it is ever yours.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, July 4, 1737.

I HAVE been very ill, and am still hardly recovered. Do you remember Elegy 5th, Book 3d, of Tibullus, "*Vos tenet*," &c.; and do you remember a letter of Mr. Pope's, in sickness, to Mr. Steele? This melancholy elegy and this melancholy letter I turned into a more melancholy epistle of my own, during my sickness, in the way of imitation; and this I send to you and my friends at Cambridge, not to divert them, for it cannot, but merely to shew them how sincere I was when sick: I hope my sending it to them now may convince them I am no less sincere, though perhaps more simple, when well†.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, Aug. 22, 1737.

AFTER a month's expectation of you, and a fortnight's despair, at Cambridge, I am come to town, and to better hopes

* i. e. A man who deals only in coarse and ordinary wares.

† See the poem [Ad Amicos] in *Elegant Extracts in Verse*.

of seeing you. If what you sent me last be the product of your melancholy, what may I not expect from your more cheerful hours? For by this time the ill health that you complain of is (I hope) quite departed; though, if I were self-interested, I ought to wish for the continuance of any thing that could be the occasion of so much pleasure to me. Low spirits are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do; nay, and pay visits, and will even affect to be jocose, and force a feeble laugh with me; but most commonly we sit alone together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world. However, when you come, I believe they must undergo the fate of all humble companions, and be discarded. Would I could turn them to the same use that you have done, and make an Apollo of them! If they could write such verses with me, not hartshorn, nor spirit of amber, nor all that furnishes the closet of an apothecary's widow, should persuade me to part with them: but, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of lady Walpole's death on Saturday night last. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace must feel on that account obliges me to have done, in reminding you that I am yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

September, 1737.

I WAS hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road, which your coach-wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you; suffice it that I arrived safe* at my uncle's, who is a great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing; and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile,

through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing in it but myself. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff; but just such hills as people, who love their necks as well as I do, may venture to climb, and crags that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous: both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds,

And as they bow their hoary tops relate,
In murmuring sounds, the dark decrees of fate;
While visions, as poetic eyes avow,
Cling to each leaf, and swarm on every bough.

At the foot of one of these squats me (*il penseroso*), and there I grow to the trunk for a whole morning. The timorous hare and sportive squirrel gambol around me like Adam in Paradise, before he had an Eve; but I think he did not use to read Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this situation I often converse with my Horace, aloud too, that is, talk to you; but I do not remember that I ever heard you answer me. I beg pardon for taking all the conversation to myself, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old†, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him, and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I shall be in town in about three weeks. Adieu.

LETTER XXXVII.

From the same to the same‡.

Burnham, Sept. 1737.

I SYMPATHIZE with you in the sufferings which you foresee are coming upon

† He lived nine years longer, and died at the great age of eighty-six. Mr. Gray always thought highly of his pathetic powers, at the same time that he blamed his ill-taste for mixing them so injudiciously with farce, in order to produce that monstrous species of composition called Tragi-comedy.

‡ Mr. Walpole was at this time with his father at Houghton. Mr. Gray writes from his uncle's house in Buckinghamshire.

* At Burnham in Buckinghamshire.

you. We are both at present, I imagine, in no very agreeable situation; for my part I am under the misfortune of having nothing to do; but it is a misfortune which, thank my stars, I can pretty well bear. You are in a confusion of wine, and roaring, and hunting, and tobacco, and, Heaven be praised, you too can pretty well bear it; while our evils are no more, I believe we shall not much repine. I imagine, however, you will rather choose to converse with the living dead, that adorn the walls of your apartments, than with the dead living that deck the middles of them; and prefer a picture of still life to the realities of a noisy one; and, as I guess, will imitate what you prefer, and for an hour or two at noon will stick yourself up as formal as if you had been fixed in your frame for these hundred years, with a pink or rose in one hand, and a great seal ring on the other. Your name, I assure you, has been propagated in these countries by a convert of yours, one —; he has brought over his whole family to you; they were before pretty good Whigs, but now they are absolute Walpolians. We have hardly any body in the parish but knows exactly the dimensions of the hall and saloon at Houghton, and begin to believe that the lanthorn* is not so great a consumer of the fat of the land as disaffected persons have said; for your reputation, we keep to ourselves your not hunting nor drinking hogan, either of which here would be sufficient to lay your honour in the dust. To-morrow se'nnight I hope to be in town, and not long after at Cambridge. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, Dec. 2, 1738.

RECEIVING no answer to my last letter, which I writ above a month ago, I must own I am a little uneasy. The slight shadow of you which I had in town, has only served to endear you to me the more. The moments I past with you made a strong impression upon me. I singled you out for a friend; and I would have you know me to be yours, if you deem me worthy. Alas! Gray, you cannot imagine how miserably my time passes

away. My health and nerves and spirits are, thank my stars, the very worst, I think, in Oxford. Four-and-twenty hours of pure unalloyed health together are as unknown to me as the four hundred thousand characters in the Chinese vocabulary. One of my complaints has of late been so overcivil as to visit me regularly once a month, *jam certus conviva*. This is a painful nervous headache, which perhaps you have sometimes heard me speak of before. Give me leave to say, I find no physic comparable to your letters. If, as it is said in Ecclesiastical, "Friendship be the physic of the mind," prescribe to me, dear Gray, as often and as much as you think proper, I shall be a most obedient patient.

Non ego

Fidis irascar medicis, offender amicus.

I venture here to write you down a Greek epigram†, which I lately turned into Latin, and hope you will excuse it.

*Perspicui puerum ludentem in margine rivi,
Innumvit vitreae limpidus error aquae:
At gelido ut mater moribundum è flumine trazit
Credula, et amplexu funus inane foret;
Paulatim puer in dilecto pectore, somno
Languidus, æternum lumina composuit.*

Adieu! I am going to my tutor's lectures on one Puffendorff, a very jurisprudent author as you shall read on a summer's day. Believe me yours, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Dartmouth-street, Feb. 21, 1737-8.

I OUGHT to answer you in Latin, but I feel I dare not enter the lists with you, *cupidum, pater optime, vires deficiunt*. Seriously, you write in that language with a grace and an Augustan urbanity that amazes me: your Greek too is perfect in its kind. And here let me wonder that a man, *longè Græcorum doctissimus*, should be at a loss for the verse and chapter whence my epigram is taken. I am sorry I have not my Aldus with me, that I might satisfy your curiosity; but he with all my other literary folks are left at Oxford, and therefore you must still rest in suspense. I thank you again and again for your medical prescription. I know very well that those "*risus, fes-*

† Of Posidippus. Vide Anthologia, H. Stephan. p. 220.

* A favourite object of Tory satire at the time.

vivitates et facetiæ” would contribute greatly to my cure; but then you must be my apothecary as well as physician, and make up the dose as well as direct it; send me, therefore, an electuary of these drugs, made up *secundum artem*, “*et eris mihi magnus Apollo*,” in both his capacities, as a god of poets and god of physicians. Wish me joy of leaving my college, and leave yours as fast as you can. I shall be settled at the Temple very soon.

LETTER XL.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

August, 1738

My dear sir, I should say Mr. Inspector General of the exports and imports*; but that appellation would make but an odd figure in conjunction with the three familiar monosyllables above written, for

*Non bene conveniunt, nec in unâ sede morantur
Majestas et amor.*

Which is, being interpreted, Love does not live at the Custom-house. However, by what style, title, or denomination soever you choose to be dignified or distinguished hereafter, these three words will stick by you like a bur, and you can no more get quit of these and your Christian name than St. Anthony could of his pig. My motions at present (which you are pleased to ask after) are much like those of a pendulum, or (Dr. Longically† speaking) oscillatory. I swing from chapel or hall home, and from home to chapel or hall. All the strange incidents that happen in my journeys and returns I shall be sure to acquaint you with; the most wonderful is, that it now rains exceedingly; this has refreshed the prospect, as the way for the most part lies between green fields on either hand, terminated with buildings at some distance, castles, I presume, and of great antiquity. The roads are very good, being, as I suspect, the works of Julius Cæsar’s army, for they still preserve, in many places, the appearance of a pavement in pretty good repair, and,

* Mr. Walpole was just named to that post, which he exchanged soon after for that of usher of the exchequer.

† Dr. Long, the master of Pembroke-hall, at this time read lectures in experimental philosophy.

if they were not so near home, might perhaps be as much admired as the Via Appia; there are at present several rivulets to be crossed, and which serve to enlighten the view all around. The country is exceedingly fruitful in ravens and such black cattle; but not to tire you with my travels, I abruptly conclude yours, &c.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

Sept. 1738.

I AM coming away all so fast, and leaving behind me, without the least remorse, all the beauties of Sturbridge fair. Its white bears may roar, its apes may wring their hands, and crocodiles cry their eyes out, all is one for that; I shall not once visit them, nor so much as take my leave. The university has published a severe edict against schismatical congregations, and created half a dozen new little proctorlings to see its order executed, being under mighty apprehensions lest Henley‡ and his gilt tub should come to the fair and seduce their young ones: but their pains are to small purpose, for lo, after all, he is not coming.

I am at this instant in the very agonies of leaving college, and would not wish the worst of my enemies a worse situation. If you knew the dust, the old boxes, the bedsteads, and tutors that are about my ears, you would look upon this letter as a great effort of my resolution and unconcernedness in the midst of evils. I fill up my paper with a loose sort of version of that scene in *Pastor Fido* that begins, “*Care selve beati*.”

LETTER XLII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Sept. 17, 1738.

I THANK you again and again for your two last most agreeable letters. They could not have come more *a-propos*; I was without any books to divert me, and they supplied the want of every thing: I made them my Classics in the country; they were my Horace and Tibullus: *Non ita loquor assentandi causâ, ut probè nosti si me noris; verum quia sic mea est sententia*. I am but just come to

‡ Orator Henley.

town; and, to shew you my esteem of your favours, I venture to send you by the penny post, to your father's, what you will find on the next page; I hope it will reach you soon after your arrival, your boxes out of the waggon, yourself out of the coach, and tutors out of your memory.

Adieu; we shall see one another, I hope, to-morrow.

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Temple, Sept. 28, 1739.

IF wishes could turn to realities, I would fling down my law books, and sup with you to-night. But, alas! here am I doomed to fix, while you are fluttering from city to city, and enjoying all the pleasures which a gay climate can afford. It is out of the power of my heart to envy your good fortune, yet I cannot help indulging a few natural desires; as for example, to take a walk with you on the banks of the Rhone, and to be climbing up Mount Fourviere;

*Jam mens prætrepidans avel vagari:
Jam læti studio pedes vigescunt.*

However, so long as I am not deprived of your correspondence, so long shall I always find some pleasure in being at home. And, setting all vain curiosity aside, when the fit is over, and my reason begins to come to herself, I have several other powerful motives which might easily cure me of my restless inclinations: amongst these, my mother's ill state of health is not the least; which was the reason of our going to Tunbridge, so that you cannot expect much description or amusement from thence. Nor indeed is there much room for either; for all diversions there may be reduced to two articles, gaming and going to church. They were pleased to publish certain Tunbrigiana this season; but such ana! I believe there were never so many vile little verses put together before. So much for Tunbridge. London affords me as little to say. What! so huge a town as London? Yes, consider only how I live in that town. I never go into the gay world or high world, and consequently receive nothing from thence to brighten my imagination. The busy world I leave to the busy; and am re-

solved never to talk politics till I can act at the same time. To tell old stories, or prate of old books, seems a little musty; and *toujours chapon bouilli* will not do. However, for want of better fare, take another little mouthful of my poetry.

*O mea jucunda comes quietis!
Quæ ferè ægrotum solita es levare
Pectus, et sensim ah! nimis ingruentes
Fallere curas:*

*Quid cunæ? quanto Lyra dic furore
Gesties, quando hæc reducem sodalem
Glauciam* gaudere simul videbis,
Méque sub umbrâ?*

LETTER XLIV.

From the same to the same.

Pope's, March 28, 1742.

I WRITE to make you write, for I have not much to tell you. I have recovered no spirits as yet; but as I am not displeased with my company, I sit purring by the fire-side in my arm-chair with no small satisfaction. I read too sometimes, and have begun Tacitus, but have not yet read enough to judge of him; only his Pannonian sedition in the first book of his Annals, which is just as far as I have got, seemed to me a little tedious. I have no more to say, but to desire you will write letters of a handsome length, and always answer me within a reasonable space of time, which I leave to your discretion.

P. S. The new Dunciad! *qu'en pensez vous?*

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

I TRUST to the country, and that easy indolence you say you enjoy there, to restore you your health and spirits; and doubt not but, when the sun grows warm enough to tempt you from your fire-side, you will (like all other things) be the better for his influence. He is my old friend, and an excellent nurse, I assure you. Had it not been for him, life had often been to me intolerable. Pray do not imagine that Tacitus, of all authors in the world, can be tedious. An annalist, you know, is by no means master of his subject; and I think one may ven-

* He gives Mr. Gray the name of Glaucias frequently in his Latin verse, as Mr. Gray calls him Favonius.

ture to say, that if those Pannonian affairs are tedious in his hands, in another's they would have been insupportable. However, fear not, they will soon be over, and he will make ample amends. A man, who could join the brilliant of wit and concise sententiousness peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection and good sense of the best moderns, cannot choose but have something to strike you. Yet what I admire in him, above all this, is his detestation of tyranny, and the high spirit of liberty that every now and then breaks out, as it were, whether he would or no. I remember a sentence in his "Agricola," that (concise as it is) I always admired for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of that general, where he had made him coheir with his wife and daughter, "*Satis constabat latatum eum, velut honore, judicioque: tam cæca et corrupta mens assiduæ adulationibus erat, ut nesciret à bono patre non scribi heredem, nisi malum principem.*"

As to the Dunciad, it is greatly admired: the Genii of operas and schools, with their attendants, the pleas of the Virtuosos and Florists, and the yawn of Dulness in the end, are as fine as any thing he has written. The Metaphysician's part is to me the worst; and here and there a few ill expressed lines, and some hardly intelligible.

I take the liberty of sending you a long speech of Agrippina; much too long, but I could be glad you would retrench it. Acronia, you may remember, had been giving quiet counsels. I fancy, if it ever be finished, it will be in the nature of Nat. Lee's Bedlam Tragedy, which had twenty-five acts and some odd scenes.

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, April, Thursday.

You are the first who ever made a Muse of a cough; to me it seems a much more easy task to versify in one's sleep (that indeed you were of old famous for*), than for want of it. Not the wakeful nightingale (when she had a cough) ever

sung so sweetly. I give you thanks for your warble, and wish you could sing yourself to rest. These wicked remains of your illness will sure give way to warm weather and gentle exercise; which I hope you will not omit as the season advances. Whatever low spirits and indolence, the effect of them, may advise to the contrary, I pray you add five steps to your walk daily for my sake; by the help of which, in a month's time, I propose to set you on horseback.

I talked of the Dunciad as concluding you had seen it; if you have not, do you choose I should get and send it to you? I have myself, upon your recommendation, been reading "Joseph Andrews." The incidents are ill laid and without invention; but the characters have a great deal of nature, which always pleases even in her lowest shapes. Parson Adams is perfectly well; so is Mrs. Slipslop, and the story of Wilson; and throughout he shews himself well read in stage-coaches, country squires, inns, and inns of court. His reflections upon high people and low people, and misses and masters, are very good. However the exaltedness of some minds (or rather, as I shrewdly suspect, their insipidity and want of feeling or observation) may make them insensible to these light things (I mean such as characterize and paint nature), yet surely they are as weighty and much more useful than your grave discourses upon the mind†, the passions, and what not. Now, as the paradisiacal pleasures of the Mahometans consist in playing upon the flute and lying with Houris, be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon.

You are very good in giving yourself the trouble to read and find fault with my long harangues. Your freedom (as you call it) has so little need of apologies, that I should scarce excuse you treating me any otherwise: which, whatever compliment it might be to my vanity, would be making a very ill one to my understanding. As to matter of style I have this to say: the language of the age is never the language of poetry; except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose.

† He seems here to glance at Hutchinson, the disciple of Shaftesbury; of whom he had not a much better opinion than of his master.

* At Eton school.

Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost every one that has written has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives; nay, sometimes words of their own composition or invention. Shakespear and Milton have been great creators this way; and no one more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions from the former. Let me give you some instances from Dryden, whom every body reckons a great master of our poetical tongue. Full of *useful mopings*—unlike the *trim* of love—a pleasant *beverage*—a *roundelay* of love—stood silent in his *mood*—with knots and *knares* deformed—his *ireful mood*—in proud *array*—his *boon* was granted—*disarray* and shameful rout—*wayward* but wise—*furbished* for the field—the *foiled dodered oaks*—*disherited*—*smouldering flames*—*retchless* of laws—*crones* old and ugly—the *beldam* at his side—the *grandam-hag*—*villanize* his father's fame.—But they are infinite: and our language not being a settled thing (like the French), has an undoubted right to words of an hundred years old, provided antiquity have not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shakespear's language is one of his principal beauties; and he has no less advantage over your Addisons and Rowes in this, than in those other great excellencies you mention. Every word in him is a picture. Pray, put me the following lines into the tongue of our modern dramatics;

But I that am not shap'd for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass:
I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph:
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,

and what follows. To me they appear untranslatable; and if this be the case, our language is greatly degenerated. However, the affectation of imitating Shakespear may doubtless be carried too far; and is no sort of excuse for sentiments ill-suited, or speeches ill-timed, which I believe is a little the case with me. I guess the most faulty expressions may be these—*silken*—son of *dalliance*—*drowsier* pretensions—*wrinkled beldams*—*arched* the hearer's brow and *ripped* his eyes in *fearful extasie*. These

are easily altered or omitted; and indeed if the thoughts be wrong or superfluous, there is nothing easier than to leave out the whole. The first ten or twelve lines are, I believe, the best*; and as for the rest, I was betrayed into a good deal of it by Tacitus; only what he has said in five words, I imagine I have said in fifty lines: such is the misfortune of imitating the inimitable. Now, if you are of my opinion, *una litura* may do the business better than a dozen; and you need not fear unravelling my web. I am a sort of spider; and have little else to do but spin it over again, or creep to some other place and spin there. Alas! for one who has nothing to do but amuse himself. I believe my amusements are as little amusing as most folks. But no matter; it makes the hours pass; and is better than *ἐν ἀμαθίᾳ καὶ ἀμουσίᾳ καταβιβάζειν*. Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

To begin with the conclusion of your letter, which is Greek, I desire that you will quarrel no more with your manner of passing your time. In my opinion it is irreproachable, especially as it produces such excellent fruit; and if I, like a saucy bird, must be pecking at it, you ought to consider that it is because I like it. No *una litura* I beg you, no unravelling of your web, dear sir! only pursue it a little farther, and then one shall be able to judge of it a little better. You know the crisis of a play is in the first act; its damnation or salvation wholly rests there. But till that first act is over, every body suspends his vote; so how do you think I can form, as yet, any just idea of the speeches in regard to their length or shortness? The connexion and symmetry of such little parts with one another must naturally escape me, as not having the plan of the whole in my head; neither can I decide about the thoughts, whether they are wrong or superfluous; they may have some future tendency which I perceive not. The style only was free to me, and there I find we are pretty much of the same

* The lines which he means here are from—*thus ever grave and undisturb'd reflection—to Rubellius lives*. For the part of the scene, which he sent in his former letter, began there.

sentiment: for you say the affectation of imitating Shakspeare may doubtless be carried too far; I say as much and no more. For old words we know are old gold, provided they are well chosen. Whatever Ennius was, I do not consider Shakspeare as a dunghill in the least: on the contrary, he is a mine of ancient ore, where all our great modern poets have found their advantage. I do not know how it is; but his old expressions have more energy in them than ours, and are even more adapted to poetry; certainly, where they are judiciously and sparingly inserted, they add a certain grace to the composition; in the same manner as Poussin gave a beauty to his pictures by his knowledge in the ancient proportions: but should he, or any other painter, carry the imitation too far, and neglect that best of models, Nature, I am afraid it would prove a very flat performance. To finish this long criticism: I have this farther notion about old words revived (is not this a pretty way of finishing?): I think them of excellent use in tales: they add a certain drollery to the comic, and a romantic gravity to the serious, which are both charming in their kind; and this way of charming Dryden understood very well. One need only read Milton to acknowledge the dignity they give the epic. But now comes my opinion, that they ought to be used in tragedy more sparingly than in most kinds of poetry. Tragedy is designed for public representation, and what is designed for that should be certainly most intelligible. I believe half the audience that come to Skakspeare's plays do not understand the half of what they hear. But *finissons enfin*. Yet one word more. You think the ten or twelve first lines the best, now I am for the fourteen last; add, that they contain not one word of ancients.

I rejoice you found amusement in Joseph Andrews. But then I think your conceptions of Paradise a little upon the Bergerac. *Les Lettres de Seraphim R. à Madame la Cherubinesse de 2*. What a piece of extravagance would there be!

And now you must know that my body continues weak and enervate. And for my animal spirits, they are in perpetual fluctuation: some whole days I have no relish, no attention for any thing: at other times I revive, and am

capable of writing a long letter, as you see: and though I do not write speeches, yet I translate them. When you understand what speech, you will own that it is a bold, and perhaps a dull attempt. In three words, it is prose, it is from Tacitus, it is of Germanicus. Peruse, perpend, pronounce.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, April, 1742.

I SHOULD not have failed to answer your letter immediately, but I went out of town for a little while, which hindered me. Its length (besides the pleasure naturally accompanying a long letter from you) affords me a new one, when I think it is a symptom of the recovery of your health, and flatter myself, that your bodily strength returns in proportion. Pray do not forget to mention the progress you make continually. As to Agrippina, I begin to be of your opinion; and find myself (as women are of their children) less enamoured of my productions the older they grow. She is laid up to sleep till next summer; so bid her good night. I think you have translated Tacitus very justly, that is, freely; and accommodated his thoughts to the turn and genius of our language; which, though I commend your judgment, is no commendation of the English tongue, which is too diffuse, and daily grows more and more enervate. One shall never be more sensible of this than in turning an author like Tacitus. I have been trying it in some parts of Thucydides (who has a little resemblance of him in his conciseness), and endeavoured to do it closely, but found it produced mere nonsense. If you have any inclination to see what figure Tacitus makes in Italian, I have a Tuscan translation of Davanzati, much esteemed in Italy; and will send you the same speech you sent me; that is, if you care for it. In the mean time accept of Propertius*.

* A translation of the first Elegy of the second book, in English rhyme.

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Pope's, May 5, 1742.

WITHOUT any preface I come to your verses, which I read over and over with excessive pleasure, and which are at least as good as Propertius. I am only sorry you follow the blunders of Broukhusius, all whose insertions are nonsense. I have some objections to your antiquated words, and am also an enemy to Alexandrines; at least I do not like them in Elegy. But, after all, I admire your translation so extremely, that I cannot help repeating I long to shew you some little errors you are fallen into by following Broukhusius. Were I with you now, and Propertius with your verses lay upon the table between us, I could discuss this point in a moment; but there is nothing so tiresome as spinning out a criticism in a letter; doubts arise, and explanations follow, till there swells out at least a volume of undigested observations; and all because you are not with him whom you want to convince. Read only the letters between Pope and Cromwell in proof of this; they dispute without end. Are you aware now that I have an interest all this while in banishing criticism from our correspondence? Indeed I have; for I am going to write down a little Ode (if it deserves the name) for your perusal, which I am afraid will hardly stand that test.

LETTER L.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, May 8, 1742.

You see, by what I send you, that I converse, as usual, with none but the dead: they are my old friends, and almost make me long to be with them. You will not wonder, therefore, that I who live only in times past, am able to tell you no news of the present. I have finished the Peloponnesian war much to my honour, and a tight conflict it was, I promise you. I have drank and sung with Anacreon for the last fortnight, and am now feeding sheep with Theocritus. Besides, to quit my figure (because it is foolish), I have run over Pliny's Epistles, and Martial *ἐκ παρέργου*: not to mention Petrarch, who, by the way, is

sometimes very tender and natural. I must needs tell you three lines in Anacreon, where the expression seems to me inimitable. He is describing hair as he would have it painted:

Ἐλικας δ' ἐλευθέρους μοῖ
Πλοκάμῳ ἀτάκτα συνθείς
Ἄφες ὥς θέλονσι κεῖσθαι.

Guess, too, where this is about a dimple:

*Sigilla in mento impressa Amoris digito
Vestigia demonstrant multitudinem.*

LETTER LI.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Pope's, May 11, 1742.

YOUR fragment is in Aulus Gellius; and both it and your Greek delicious. But why are you thus melancholy? I am so sorry for it, that you see I cannot forbear writing again the very first opportunity; though I have little to say, except to expostulate with you about it. I find you converse much with the dead, and I do not blame you for that; I converse with them too, though not indeed with the Greek. But I must condemn you for your longing to be with them. What, are there no joys among the living? I could almost cry out with Catullus, "*Alphene immemor, atque unanimis falsè sodalibus!*" But to turn an accusation thus upon another is ungenerous; so I will take my leave of you for the present with a "*Vale, et vive paulisper cum vivis.*"

LETTER LII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, May 27, 1742.

MINE, you are to know, is a white melancholy, or rather leucocholy for the most part; which, though it seldom laughs or dances, nor ever amounts to what one calls joy or pleasure, yet is a good easy sort of a state, and *ça ne laisse que de s'amuser*. The only fault of it is insipidity, which is apt now and then to give a sort of *ennui*, which makes one form certain little wishes that signify nothing. But there is another sort, black indeed, which I have now and then felt, that has somewhat in it like Tertullian's rule of faith, *Credo, quia impossibile est*; for it believes, nay, is sure of every thing

that is unlikely, so it be but frightful; and, on the other hand, excludes and shuts its eyes to the most possible hopes, and every thing that is pleasurable; from this the Lord deliver us! for none but he and sunshiny weather can do it. In hopes of enjoying this kind of weather, I am going into the country for a few weeks, but shall be never the nearer any society: so, if you have any charity, you will continue to write. My life is like Harry the Fourth's supper of hens: "*Poulets à la broche, poulets en ragoût, poulets en hâchis, poulets en fricusees.*"—— Reading here, reading there; nothing but books with different sauces. Do not let me lose my dessert then; for though that be reading too, yet it has a very different flavour. The May seems to be come since your invitation; and I propose to bask in her beams and dress me in her roses.

Et caput in vernâ semper habere rosâ.

I shall see Mr. —— and his wife, nay, and his child too, for he has got a boy. Is it not odd to consider one's contemporaries in the grave light of husband and father? There are my lords —— and ——, they are statesmen; do not you remember them dirty boys playing at cricket? As for me, I am never a bit the older, nor the bigger, nor the wiser than I was then; no, not for having been beyond sea. Pray how are you?

LETTER LIII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.*

Cambridge, Dec. 27, 1742.

I OUGHT to have returned you my thanks a long time ago, for the pleasure, I should say prodigy, of your letter; for such a thing has not happened above twice within this last age to mortal man, and no one here can conceive what it may portend. You have heard, I suppose, how I have been employed a part of the time; how, by my own indefatigable application for these ten years past,

* Of Old Park, near Durham. With this gentleman Mr. Gray contracted an acquaintance very early; and though they were not educated together at Eton, yet afterwards at Cambridge, when the doctor was fellow of Pembroke Hall, they became intimate friends, and continued so to the time of Mr. Gray's death.

and by the care and vigilance of that worthy magistrate the man in blue† (who, I assure you, has not spared his labour, nor could have done more for his own son), I am got half way to the top of jurisprudence‡, and bid as fair as another body to open a case of impotency with all decency and circumspection. You see my ambition. I do not doubt but some thirty years hence I shall convince the world and you that I am a very pretty young fellow; and may come to shine in a profession, perhaps the noblest of all except man-midwifery. As for you, if your distemper and you can but agree about going to London, I may reasonably expect in a much shorter time to see you in your three-cornered villa, doing the honours of a well-furnished table with as much dignity, as rich a mien, and as capacious a belly, as Dr. Mead. Methinks I see Dr. ——, at the lower end of it, lost in admiration of your goodly person and parts, cramming down his envy (for it will rise) with the wing of a pheasant, and drowning it in neat Burgundy. But not to tempt your asthma too much with such a prospect, I should think you might be almost as happy and as great as this even in the country. But you know best, and I should be sorry to say any thing that might stop you in the career of glory; far be it from me to hamper the wheels of your gilded chariot. Go on, sir Thomas; and when you die (for even physicians must die), may the faculty in Warwick Lane erect your statue in the very niche of sir John Cutler's.

I was going to tell you how sorry I am for your illness, but I hope it is too late now: I can only say that I really was very sorry. May you live a hundred Christmasses, and eat as many collars of brown stuck with rosemary. Adieu, &c.

LETTER LIV.

From the same to the same.

Peterhouse, April 26, 1744.

You write so feelingly to Mr. Brown, and represent your abandoned condition in terms so touching, that what gra-

† A servant of the vice-chancellor's for the time being, usually known by the name of Blue Coat, whose business it is to attend acts for decrees, &c.

‡ i. e. Bachelor of civil law.

titude could not effect in several months, compassion has brought about in a few days; and broke that strong attachment, or rather allegiance, which I and all here owe to our sovereign lady and mistress, the president of presidents and head of heads (if I may be permitted to pronounce her name, that ineffable Octogrammaton), the power of Laziness. You must know she had been pleased to appoint me (in preference to so many old servants of hers, who had spent their whole lives in qualifying themselves for the office) grand picker of straws and push-pin player to her Supinity (for that is her title). The first is much in the nature of the lord president of the council; and the other like the groom-porter, only without the profit; but as they are both things of very great honour in this country, I considered with myself the load of envy attending such great charges; and besides (between you and me), I found myself unable to support the fatigue of keeping up the appearance that persons of such dignity must do; so I thought proper to decline it, and excused myself as well as I could. However, as you see such an affair must take up a good deal of time, and it has always been the policy of this court to proceed slowly, like the Imperial and that of Spain, in the dispatch of business, you will on this account the easier forgive me, if I have not answered your letter before.

You desire to know, it seems, what character the poem of your young friend bears here*. I wonder that you ask the opinion of a nation, where those, who pretend to judge, do not judge at all; and the rest (the wiser part) wait to catch the judgment of the world immediately above them; that is, Dick's and the Rainbow coffee-houses. Your readier way would be to ask the ladies that keep the bars in these two theatres of criticism. However, to shew you that I am a judge, as well as my countrymen, I will tell you, though I have rather turned it over than read it (but no mat-

ter; no more have they), that it seems to me above the middling; and now and then, for a little while, rises even to the best, particularly in description. It is often obscure, and even unintelligible; and too much infected with the Hutchinson jargon. In short, its great fault is, that it was published at least nine years too early. And so methinks in a few words (*à la mode du Temple*) I have very pertly dispatched what perhaps may for several years have employed a very ingenious man worth fifty of myself.

You are much in the right to have a taste for Socrates; he was a divine man. I must tell you, by way of news of the place, that the other day a certain new professor made an apology for him an hour long in the schools; and all the world brought in Socrates guilty, except the people of his own college.

The Muse is gone, and left me in far worse company; if she returns, you will hear of her. As to her child† (since you are as good as to inquire after it), it is but a puling chit yet, not a bit grown to speak of; I believe, poor thing, it has got the worms, that will carry it off at last. Mr. Trollope and I are in a course of tar-water; he for his present, and I for my future distempers. If you think it will kill me, send away a man and horse directly; for I drink like a fish. Yours, &c.

LETTER LV.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, Dec. 11, 1746.

I WOULD make you an excuse (as indeed I ought) if they were a sort of thing I ever gave any credit to myself in these cases; but I know they are never true. Nothing so silly as indolence when it hopes to disguise itself: every one knows it by its saunter, as they do his majesty (God bless him!) at a masquerade, by the firmness of his tread and the elevation of his chin. However, somewhat I had to say that has a little shadow of reason in it. I have been in town (I suppose you know) flaunting about at all kind of public places with two friends lately returned from abroad. The world itself has some attractions in it to a solitary of six years standing; and agreeable well-meaning

† He here means his poem *De Principiis Cogitandi*.

* "Pleasures of the Imagination." From the posthumous publication of Dr. Akenside's Poems, it should seem that the author had very much the same opinion afterwards of his own work, which Mr. Gray here expresses; since he undertook a reform of it, which must have given him, had he concluded it, as much trouble as if he had written it entirely new.

people of sense (thank Heaven there are so few of them) are my peculiar magnet. It is no wonder then if I felt some reluctance at parting with them so soon; or if my spirits, when I returned back to my cell, should sink for a time, not indeed to storm and tempest, but a good deal below changeable. Besides Seneca says (and my pitch of philosophy does not pretend to be much above Seneca) "*Nunquam mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid ex eo quod composui, turbatur: aliquid ex his quæ fugavi, redit.*" And it will happen to such as us, mere imps of science. Well it may, when Wisdom herself is forced often

In sweet retired solitude
To plume her feathers, and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.

It is a foolish thing that without money one cannot either live as one pleases, or where and with whom one pleases. Swift somewhere says, that money is liberty; and I fear money is friendship too and society, and almost every external blessing. It is a great, though an ill-natured, comfort, to see most of those who have it in plenty, without pleasure, without liberty, and without friends.

I am not altogether of your opinion as to your historical consolation in time of trouble: a calm melancholy it may produce, a stiller sort of despair (and that only in some circumstances, and on some constitutions); but I doubt no real comfort or content can ever arise in the human mind, but from hope.

I take it very ill you should have been in the twentieth year of the war*, and yet say nothing of the retreat before Syracuse: is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life? And how does Xenophon or Plutarch agree with you? For my part, I read Aristotle, his poetics, politics, and morals; though I do not well know which is which. In the first place, he is the hardest author by far I ever meddled with. Then he has a dry conciseness, that makes one imagine one is perusing a table of contents rather than a book: it tastes for all the world like chopped hay, or rather like chopped logic; for he has a violent affection to that art, being in some sort his own invention; so that he often loses himself

in little trifling distinctions and verbal niceties; and, what is worse, leaves you to extricate him as well as you can. Thirdly, he has suffered vastly from the transcribblers, as all authors of great brevity necessarily must. Fourthly and lastly, he has abundance of fine uncommon things, which make him well worth the pains he gives one. You see what you are to expect from him.

LETTER LVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Cambridge, 1747.

I HAD been absent from this place a few days, and at my return found Cibber's book† upon my table. I return you my thanks for it, and have already run over a considerable part; for who could resist Mrs. Letitia Pilkington's recommendation? (By the way, is there any such gentlewoman‡? or has somebody put on the style of a scribbling woman's panegyric to deceive and laugh at Colley?) He seems to me full as pert and as dull as usual. There are whole pages of common-place stuff, that for stupidity might have been wrote by Dr. Waterland, or any other grave divine, did not the flirting saucy phrase give them at a distance an air of youth and gaiety; it is very true, he is often in the right with regard to Tully's weaknesses; but was there any one that did not see them? Those, I imagine, that would find a man after God's own heart, are no more likely to trust the Doctor's recommendation than the Player's; and as to reason and truth, would they know their own faces, do you think, if they looked in the glass, and saw themselves so bedizened in tattered fringe and tarnished lace, in French jewels and dirty furbelows, the frippery of a stroller's wardrobe?

Literature, to take it in its most comprehensive sense, and include every thing that requires invention or judgment, or barely application and industry, seems indeed drawing apace to its dissolution, and remarkably since the beginning of the war. I remember to have read Mr. Spence's pretty book; though (as he then had not been at Rome for the last

† Entitled "Observations on Cicero's Character."

‡ This lady made herself more known some time after the date of this letter.

* Thucydides, lib. vii.

time) it must have increased greatly since that in bulk. If you ask me what I read, I protest I do not recollect one syllable; but only in general, that they were the best-bred sort of men in the world, just the kind of *frinds* one would wish to meet in a fine summer's evening, if one wished to meet any at all. The heads and tails of the dialogues, published separate in 16mo, would make the sweetest reading in *natiur* for young gentlemen of family and fortune, that are learning to dance. I rejoice to hear there is such a crowd of dramatical performances coming upon the stage. Agrippina can stay very well, she thanks you, and be damned at leisure: I hope in God you have not mentioned, or shewed to any body, that scene (for trusting in its badness, I forgot to caution you concerning it); but I heard the other day, that I was writing a play, and was told the name of it, which nobody here could know, I am sure. The employment you propose to me much better suits my inclination; but I much fear our joint-stock would hardly compose a small volume; what I have is less considerable than you would imagine, and of that little we should not be willing to publish all. ***†

This is all I can any where find. You, I imagine, may have a good deal more. I should not care how unwise the ordinary run of readers might think my affection for him, provided those few, that ever loved any body, or judged of any thing rightly, might, from such little remains, be moved to consider what he would have been; and to wish that Heaven had granted him a longer life and a mind more at ease.

I send you a few lines, though Latin, which you do not like, for the sake of the subject†; it makes part of a large design, and is the beginning of the fourth book, which was intended to treat of the passions. Excuse the three first verses; you know vanity, with the Romans, is a poetical licence.

† What is here omitted was a short catalogue of Mr. West's Poetry, then in Mr. Gray's hands.

‡ The admirable apostrophe to Mr. West.

LETTER LVII.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, March 1, 1747.

As one ought to be particularly careful to avoid blunders in a compliment of condolence, it would be a sensible satisfaction to me (before I testify my sorrow, and the sincere part I take in your misfortune) to know for certain, who it is I lament. I knew Zara and Selima (Selima, was it? or Fatima?), or rather I knew them both together; for I cannot justly say which was which. Then as to your handsome cat, the name you distinguish her by, I am no less at a loss, as well knowing one's handsome cat is always the cat one likes best; or, if one be alive and the other dead, it is usually the latter that is the handsomest. Besides, if the point were never so clear, I hope you do not think me so ill-bred or so imprudent as to forfeit all my interest in the survivor: Oh no! I would rather seem to mistake, and imagine to be sure it must be the tabby one that had met with this sad accident. Till this affair is a little better determined, you will excuse me if I do not begin to cry;

"Tempus inane peto, requiem, spatiumque doloris."

Which interval is the more convenient, as it gives time to rejoice with you on your new honours§. This is only a beginning; I reckon next week we shall hear you are a free-mason, or gormogon at least. Heigh ho! I feel (as you to be sure have done long since) that I have very little to say, at least in prose. Somebody will be the better for it; I do not mean you, but your cat, *feuë Mademoiselle Selime*, whom I am about to immortalize for one week or fortnight, as follows *****||. There's a poem for you, it is rather too long for an epigraph.

LETTER LVIII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Stoke, June 5, 1748.

YOUR friendship has interested itself in my affairs so naturally, that I cannot

§ Mr. Walpole was about this time elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

|| The Reader need hardly be told, that the 4th Ode in the collection of his Poems was inserted in the place of these asterisks.

help troubling you a little with a detail of them†. ***** And now, my dear Wharton, why must I tell you a thing so contrary to my own wishes and yours? I believe it is impossible for me to see you in the North, or to enjoy any of those agreeable hours I had flattered myself with. This business will oblige me to be in town several times during the summer, particularly in August, when half the money is to paid; besides, the good people here would think me the most careless and ruinous of mortals, if I should take such a journey at this time. The only satisfaction I can pretend to, is that of hearing from you, and particularly at the time when I was bid to expect the good news of an increase of your family. Your opinion of Diodorus is doubtless right; but there are things in him very curious, got out of better authorities now lost. Do you remember the Egyptian history, and particularly the account of the gold mines? My own readings have been cruelly interrupted: what I have been highly pleased with, is the new comedy from Paris by Gresset, called *le Mechant*: if you have it not, buy his works all together in two little volumes; they are collected by the Dutch booksellers, and consequently contain some trash; and then there are the *Ververt*, the *Epistle to P. Bougeant*, the *Chartreuse*, that to his Sister, an Ode on his Country, and another on Mediocrity, and the *Sidnei*, another comedy, all which have great beauties. There is also a poem lately published by Thomson, called *The Castle of Indolence*, with some good stanzas in it. Mr. Mason is my acquaintance; I liked that Ode‡ much, but have found no one else that did. He has much fancy, little judgment, and a good deal of modesty; I take him for a good and well-meaning creature; but then he is really in simplicity a child, and loves every body he meets with: he reads little or nothing; writes abundance, and that with a design to make his fortune by it. My best compliments to Mrs. Wharton and your family: does that name

† The paragraph here omitted contained an account of Mr. Gray's loss of a house by fire in Cornhill, and the expense he should be at in rebuilding it. Though it was insured, he could at this time ill bear to lay out the additional sum necessary for the purpose.

‡ Ode to a Water-Nymph, published about this time in Dodsley's Miscellany.

include any body I am not yet acquainted with?

LETTER LIX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Stoke, August 19, 1748.

I AM glad you have had any pleasure in Gresset; he seems to me a truly elegant and charming writer; *The Mechant* is the best comedy I ever read; his *Edward* I could scarce get through; it is puerile; though there are good lines, such as this, for example:

“ *Le jour d'un nouveau regne est le jour des ingrats.* ”

But good lines will make any thing rather than a good play: however, you are to consider this a collection made up by the Dutch booksellers; many things unfinished, or written in his youth, or designed not for the world, but to make his friends laugh, as the *Lutrin vivant*, &c. There are two noble lines, which, as they are in the middle of an Ode to the King, may perhaps have escaped you:

“ *Le cri d'un peuple heureux est la seule eloquence, Qui sçait parler des Rois:* ”

which is very true, and should have been a hint to himself not to write Odes to the King at all.

As I have nothing more to say at present, I fill my paper with the beginning of an Essay; what name to give it I know not; but the subject is the Alliance of Education and Government: I mean to shew that they must both concur to produce great and useful men. I desire your judgment upon it before I proceed any further.

LETTER LX.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, March 9, 1748.

You ask for some account of books. The principal I can tell you of is a work of the president Montesquieu, the labour of twenty years; it is called *L'Esprit des Loix*, 2 vols. 4to. printed at Geneva. He lays down the principles on which are founded the three sorts of government, despotism, the limited monarchy, and the republican; and shews how from these are reduced the laws and customs by which they are guided and maintained; the education proper to each form; the influence of climate, situation, religion, &c. on the

minds of particular nations, and on their policy. The subject, you see, is as extensive as mankind; the thoughts perfectly new, generally admirable as they are just, sometimes a little too refined. In short, there are faults, but such as an ordinary man could never have committed. The style very lively and concise (consequently sometimes obscure); it is the gravity of Tacitus, whom he admires, tempered with the gaiety and fire of a Frenchman. The time of night will not suffer me to go on; but I will write again in a week.

LETTER LXI.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, April 25, 1749.

I PERCEIVE that second parts are as hard to write as they can be to read; for this, which you ought to have had a week after the first, has been a full month in coming forth. The spirit of laziness (the spirit of the place) begins to possess even me, who have so long declaimed against it; yet has it not so prevailed, but that I feel that discontent with myself, that *ennui*, that ever accompanies it in its beginnings. Time will settle my conscience; time will reconcile me to this languid companion: we shall smoke, we shall tittle, we shall doze together: we shall have our little jokes like other people, and our old stories: brandy will finish what port began; and a month after the time you will see in some corner of a London Evening-Post, "Yesterday died the reverend Mr. John Gray, Senior Fellow of Clare Hall, a facetious companion, and well respected by all that knew him. His death is supposed to have been occasioned by a fit of an apoplexy, being found fallen out of bed with his head in the chamber pot."

In the mean while, to go on with my account of new books. Montesquieu's work, which I mentioned before, is now published anew in 2 vols. 8vo. Have you seen old Crebillon's *Catalina*, a tragedy, which has had a prodigious run at Paris? Historical truth is too much perverted in it, which is ridiculous in a story so generally known; but if you can get over this, the sentiments and versification are fine, and most of the characters (particularly the principal one) painted with great spirit.

Mr. Birch, the indefatigable, has just put out a thick octavo of original papers of queen Elizabeth's time: there are many curious things in it, particularly letters from sir Robert Cecil (Salisbury) about his negotiations with Henry IV. of France, the earl of Monmouth's odd account of queen Elizabeth's death, several peculiarities of James I. and prince Henry, &c. and above all, an excellent account of the state of France, with characters of the king, his court, and ministry, by sir George Carew, ambassador there. This, I think, is all new worth mentioning, that I have seen or heard of; except A Natural History of Peru, in Spanish, printed at London, by Don — something, a man of learning, sent thither by that court on purpose.

You ask after my Chronology. It was begun, as I told you, almost two years ago, when I was in the midst of Diogenes Laertius and his philosophers, as a proœmium to their works. My intention in forming this table was not so much for public events, though these too have a column assigned them, but rather in a literary way to compare the time of all great men, their writings and their transactions. I have brought it from the 30th Olympiad, where it begins, to the 113th; that is, 332 years*. My only modern assistants were Marsham, Dodwell, and Bentley.

I have since that read Pausanias and Athenæus all through, and Æschylus again. I am now in Pindar and Lysias; for I take verse and prose together, like bread and cheese.

LETTER LXII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Warburton.

Cambridge, Aug. 8, 1749.

I PROMISED Dr. Keene long since to give you an account of our magnificence here†; but the newspapers, and he himself in person, have got the start of my indolence, so that by this time you are well acquainted with all the events

* This laborious work was formed much in the manner of the president Henault's *Histoire de France*. Every page consisted of nine columns; one of the Olympiad, the next for the Archons, the third for the public affairs of Greece, the three next for the philosophers, and the three last for poets, historians, and orators.

† The duke of Newcastle's installation as chancellor of the University.

that adorn that week of wonders. Thus much I may venture to tell you, because it is probable nobody else has done it, that our friend ——'s zeal and eloquence surpassed all power of description. Vesuvio in an eruption was not more violent than his utterance, nor (since I am at my mountains) Pelion, with all its pine-trees in a storm of wind, more impetuous than his action; and yet the Senate house still stands, and (I thank God) we are all safe and well at your service. I was ready to sink for him, and scarce dared to look about me, when I was sure it was all over; but soon found I might have spared my confusion; all people joined to applaud him. Every thing was quite right, and I dare swear not three people here but think him a model of oratory; for all the duke's little court came with a resolution to be pleased; and when the tone was once given, the University, who ever wait for the judgment of their betters, struck into it with an admirable harmony: for the rest of the performances, they were just what they usually are. Every one, while it lasted, was very gay and very busy in the morning, and very owlsh and very tipsy at night; I make no exceptions from the Chancellor to Blue coat. Mason's Ode was the only entertainment that had any tolerable elegance; and, for my own part, I think it (with some little abatements) uncommonly well on such an occasion. Pray let me know your sentiments; for doubtless you have seen it. The author of it grows apace into my good graces, as I know him more; he is very ingenious, with great good-nature and simplicity; a little vain, but in so harmless and so comical a way, that it does not offend one at all; a little ambitious, but withal so ignorant in the world and its ways, that this does not hurt him in one's opinion; so sincere and so undisguised, that no mind, with a spark of generosity, would ever think of hurting him, he lies so open to injury; but so indolent, that if he cannot overcome this habit, all his good qualities will signify nothing at all. After all, I like him so well, I could wish you knew him.

LETTER LXIII.

Mr. Gray to his Mother.

Cambridge, Nov. 7, 1749.

THE unhappy news I have just received from you equally surprises and afflicts me*. I have lost a person I loved very much, and have been used to from my infancy; but am much more concerned for your loss, the circumstances of which I forbear to dwell upon, as you must be too sensible of them yourself; and will, I fear, more and more need a consolation that no one can give, except He who has preserved her to you so many years, and at last, when it was his pleasure, has taken her from us to himself: and perhaps, if we reflect upon what she felt in this life, we may look upon this as an instance of his goodness both to her and to those that loved her. She might have languished many years before our eyes in a continual increase of pain, and totally helpless; she might have long wished to end her misery without being able to attain it; or perhaps even lost all sense, and yet continued to breathe; a sad spectacle to such as must have felt more for her than she could have done for herself. However you may deplore your own loss, yet think that she is at last easy and happy; and has now more occasion to pity us than we her. I hope, and beg, you will support yourself with that resignation we owe to Him who gave us our being for our good, and who deprives us of it for the same reason. I would have come to you directly, but you do not say whether you desire I should or not; if you do, I beg I may know it, for there is nothing to hinder me, and I am in very good health.

LETTER LXIV.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Whurton.

Stoke, August 9, 1750.

Aristotle says (one may write Greek to you without scandal) that Οἱ τόποι οὐ διαλύουσι τὴν φιλίαν ἀπλῶς, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐνέσγειαν ἐὰν δεῖ χρόνιος ἢ ἀπουσία γένηται καὶ τῆς φιλίας δοκεῖ ληθῆναι ποιεῖν ὅθεν

* The death of his aunt, Mrs. Mary Antrobus, who died the 5th of November, and was buried in a vault in Stoke Churchyard near the chancel door, in which also his mother and himself (according to the direction in his will) were afterwards buried.

εἴηται Πολλὰς δὴ φιλίας ἀπροσγηγορία διέλυσε.

But Aristotle may say whatever he pleases, I do not find myself at all the worse for it. I could indeed wish to refresh my *Ἐνέργεια* a little at Durham by the sight of you; but when is there a probability of my being so happy? It concerned me greatly when I heard the other day that your asthma continued at times to afflict you, and that you were often obliged to go into the country to breathe; you cannot oblige me more than by giving me an account both of the state of your body and mind: I hope the latter is able to keep you cheerful and easy, in spite of the frailties of its companion. As to my own, it can neither do one nor the other; and I have the mortification to find my spiritual part the most infirm thing about me. You have doubtless heard of the loss I have had in Dr. Middleton, whose house was the only easy place one could find to converse in at Cambridge: for my part, I find a friend so uncommon a thing, that I cannot help regretting even an old acquaintance, which is an indifferent likeness of it; and though I do not approve the spirit of his books, methinks it is pity the world should lose so rare a thing as a good writer.

My studies cannot furnish a recommendation of many new books to you. There is a defence of *l'Esprit des Loix*, by Montesquieu himself; it has some lively things in it, but is very short, and his adversary appears to be so mean a bigot that he deserved no answer. There are 3 vols. in 4to. of *Histoire du Cabinet du Roy*, by Messrs. Buffon and d'Aubenton; the first is a man of character, but I am told has hurt it by this work. It is all a sort of introduction to natural history: the weak part of it is a love of system which runs through it; the most contrary thing in the world to a science entirely grounded upon experiments, and which has nothing to do with vivacity of imagination. However, I cannot help commending the general view which he gives of the face of the earth, followed by a particular one of all the known nations, their peculiar figure and manners, which is the best epitome of geography I ever met with, and written with sense and elegance: in short, these books are well worth turning over. The Memoirs of the

Abbé de Mongon, in 5 vols. are highly commended, but I have not seen them. He was engaged in several embassies to Germany, England, &c. during the course of the late war. The president Henault's *Abregé Chronologique de l'Histoire de France*, I believe I have before mentioned to you as a very good book of its kind.

LETTER LXV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Cambridge, Feb. 11, 1751.

As you have brought me into a little sort of distress, you must assist me, I believe, to get out of it as well as I can. Yesterday I had the misfortune of receiving a letter from certain gentlemen (as their bookseller expresses it), who have taken the *Mazazine* of Magazines into their hand: they tell me that an ingenious poem, called *Reflections* in a Country Churchyard, has been communicated to them, which they are printing forthwith; that they are informed that the excellent author of it is I by name, and that they beg not only his indulgence, but the honour of his correspondence, &c. As I am not at all disposed to be either so indulgent, or so correspondent, as they desire, I have but one bad way left to escape the honour they would inflict upon me; and therefore am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time) from your copy, but without my name, in what form is most convenient for him, but on his best paper and character; he must correct the press himself, and print it without any interval between the stanzas, because the sense is in some places continued beyond them; and the title must be, *Elegy*, written in a Country Churchyard. If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident, I should like it better. If you behold the *Mazazine* of Magazines in the light that I do, you will not refuse to give yourself this trouble on my account, which you have taken of your own accord before now. If Dodsley do not do this immediately, he may as well let it alone.

LETTER LXVI.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Dec. 19, 1752.

HAVE you read Madame de Maintenon's Letters? They are undoubtedly genuine; they begin very early in her life, before she married Scarron, and continue after the king's death to within a little while of her own; they bear all the marks of a noble spirit (in her adversity particularly), of virtue, and unaffected devotion; insomuch, that I am almost persuaded she was actually married to Lewis the XIVth, and never his mistress; and this not out of any policy or ambition, but conscience; for she was what we should call a bigot, yet with great good sense: in short, she was too good for a court. Misfortunes in the beginning of her life had formed her mind (naturally lively and impatient) to reflection and a habit of piety. She was always miserable while she had the care of Madame de Montespan's children; timid and very cautious of making use of that unlimited power she rose to afterwards, for fear of trespassing on the king's friendship for her; and after his death not at all afraid of meeting her own.

I do not know what to say to you with regard to Racine; it sounds to me as if any body should fall upon Shakspeare, who indeed lies infinitely more open to criticism of all kinds; but I should not care to be the person that undertook it. If you do not like *Athalie* or *Britannicus*, there is no more to be said. I have done.

Bishop's Hall's satires, called *Virgide-miæ*, are lately republished. They are full of spirit and poetry; as much of the first as Dr. Donne, and far more of the latter: they were written at the university when he was about twenty-three years old, and in queen Elizabeth's time.

You do not say whether you have read the *Crito* *. I only recommend the dramatic part of the *Phædo* to you, not the argumentative. The subject of the *Eratæ* is good; it treats of that peculiar character and turn of mind which belongs to a true philosopher, but it is shorter than one would wish. The *Euthyphro* I would not read at all.

* Of Plato.

LETTER LXVII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Stoke, Jan. 1752.

I AM at present at Stoke, to which place I came at half an hour's warning upon the news I received of my mother's illness, and did not expect to have found her alive; but when I arrived she was much better, and continues so. I shall therefore be very glad to make you a visit at Strawberry-Hill, whenever you give me notice of a convenient time. I am surprised at the print, which far surpasses my idea of London graving: the drawing itself was so finished, that I suppose it did not require all the art I had imagined to copy it tolerably. My aunts seeing me open your letter, took it to be a burying ticket, and asked whether any body had left me a ring; and so they still conceive it to be, even with all their spectacles on. Heaven forbid they should suspect it to belong to any verses of mine, they would burn me for a poet. On my own part I am satisfied, if this design of yours succeed so well as you intend it; and yet I know it will be accompanied with something not at all agreeable to me. While I write this, I receive your second letter. Sure, you are not out of your wits! This I know, if you suffer my head to be printed, you will infallibly put me out of mine. I conjure you immediately to put a stop to any such design. Who is at the expense of engraving it I know not; but if it be Dodsley, I will make up the loss to him. The thing, as it was, I know, will make me ridiculous enough; but to appear in proper person, at the head of my works, consisting of half a dozen ballads in thirty pages, would be worse than the pillory. I do assure you, if I had received such a book, with such a frontispiece, without any warning, I believe it would have given me a palsy; therefore I rejoice to have received this notice, and shall not be easy till you tell me all thoughts of it are laid aside. I am extremely in earnest, and cannot bear even the idea.

I had written to Dodsley, if I had not received yours, to tell him how little I liked the title which he meant to prefix; but your letter has put all that out of my head. If you think it necessary to print these explanations for the use of

people that have no eyes, I should be glad they were a little altered. I am, to my shame, in your debt for a long letter ; but I cannot think of any thing else till you have set me at ease on this matter.

LETEER LXVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Durham, Dec. 26, 1753.

A LITTLE while before I received your melancholy letter, I had been informed by Mr. Charles Avison of one of the sad events you mention*. I know what it is to lose persons that one's eyes and heart have long been used to ; and I never desire to part with the remembrance of that loss, nor would wish you should. It is something that you had a little time to acquaint yourself with the idea beforehand ; and that your father suffered but little pain, the only thing that makes death terrible. After I have said this, I cannot help expressing my surprise at the disposition he has made of his affairs. I must (if you will suffer me to say so) call it great weakness ; and yet perhaps your affliction for him is heightened by that very weakness ; for I know it is impossible to feel an additional sorrow for the faults of those we have loved, even where that fault has been greatly injurious to ourselves. Let me desire you not to expose yourself to any further danger in the midst of that scene of sickness and death ; but withdraw as soon as possible to some place at a little distance in the country ; for I do not, in the least, like the situation you are in. I do not attempt to console you on the situation your fortune is left in ; if it were far worse, the good opinion I have of you tells me, you will never the sooner do any thing mean or unworthy of yourself ; and consequently I cannot pity you on this account ; but I sincerely do on the new loss you have had of a good and friendly man, whose memory I honour. I have seen the scene you describe, and know how dreadful it is : I know too I am the better for it. We are all idle and thoughtless things, and

have no sense, no use in the world any longer than that sad impression lasts : the deeper it is engraved the better.

LETTER LXIX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Stoke, Sept. 18, 1754.

I AM glad you enter into the spirit of Strawberry Castle ; it has a purity and propriety of Gothicism in it (with very few exceptions) that I have not seen elsewhere. My lord Radnor's vagaries I see did not keep you from doing justice to his situation, which far surpasses every thing near it ; and I do not know a more laughing scene than that about Twickenham and Richmond. Dr. Aken-side, I perceive, is no conjuror in architecture ; especially when he talks of the ruins of Persepolis, which are no more Gothic than they are Chinese. The Egyptian style (see Dr. Pocock, not his discourses, but his prints) was apparently the mother of the Greek ; and there is such a similitude between the Egyptian and those Persian ruins, as gave Diodorus room to affirm, that the old buildings of Persia were certainly performed by Egyptian artists. As to the other part of your friend's opinion, that the Gothic manner is the Saracen or Moorish, he has a great authority to support him, that of sir Christopher Wren ; and yet I cannot help thinking it undoubtedly wrong. The palaces in Spain I never saw but in description, which gives us little or no idea of things ; but the Doge's palace at Venice I have seen, which is in the Arabesque manner : and the houses of Barbary you may see in Dr. Shaw's book, not to mention abundance of other Eastern buildings in Turkey, Persia, &c. that we have views of ; and they seem plainly to be corruptions of the Greek architecture, broke into little parts indeed, and covered with little ornaments, but in a taste very distinguishable from that which we call Gothic. There is one thing that runs through the Moorish buildings, that an imitator would certainly have been first struck with, and would have tried to copy ; and that is the cupolas which cover every thing, baths, apartments, and even kitchens ; yet who ever saw a Gothic cupola ? It is a thing plainly of Greek original. I do not see any thing but the

* The death of Mr. Mason's father, and of Dr. Marmaduke Prickett, a young physician of his own age, with whom he was brought up from infancy, who died of the same infectious fever.

slender spires that serve for steeples, which may perhaps be borrowed from the Saracen minarets on their mosques.

I take it ill you should say any thing against the Mole; it is a reflection I see cast at the Thames. Do you think that rivers, which have lived in London and its neighbourhood all their days, will run roaring and tumbling about like your tramontane torrents in the North? No, they only glide and whisper.

LETTER LXX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Cambridge, March 9, 1755.

I do not pretend to humble any one's pride; I love my own too well to attempt it. As to mortifying their vanity, it is too easy and too mean a task for me to delight in. You are very good in shewing so much sensibility on my account; but be assured my taste for praise is not like that of children for fruit; if there were nothing but medlars and blackberries in the world, I would be very well content to go without any at all. I dare say that Mason, though some years younger than I, was as little elevated with the approbation of lord — and lord —, as I am mortified by their silence.

With regard to publishing, I am not so much against the thing itself, as of publishing this Ode alone*. I have two or three ideas more in my head. What is to come of them? Must they come too out in the shape of little sixpenny flames, dropping one after another till Mr. Dodsley thinks fit to collect them with Mr. This's song, and Mr. T'other's epigram, into a pretty volume? I am sure Mason must be sensible of this, and therefore cannot mean what he says. Neither am I quite of your opinion with regard to strophe and antistrophe: setting aside the difficulty of execution, methinks it has little or no effect on the ear, which scarce perceives the regular return of metres at so great a distance from one another: to make it succeed, I am persuaded the stanzas must not consist of above nine lines each at the most. Pindar has several such odes.

* His Ode on the Progress of Poetry.

LETTER LXXI.

From the same to the same.

Pembroke Hall, March 25, 1756.

THOUGH I had no reasonable excuse for myself before I received your last letter, yet since that time I have had a pretty good one, having been taken up in quarrelling with Peter-house†, and in removing myself from thence to Pembroke. This may be looked upon as a sort of æra in a life so barren of events as mine; yet I shall treat it in Voltaire's manner, and only tell you that I left my lodgings because the rooms were noisy, and the people of the house uncivil. This is all I would choose to have said about it; but if you in private should be curious enough to enter into a particular detail of facts and minute circumstances, the bearer, who was witness to them, will probably satisfy you. All I shall say more is, that I am for the present extremely well lodged here, and as quiet as in the Grand Chartreuse; and that every body (even Dr. Long himself) are as civil as they could be to Mary of Valens‡ in person.

With regard to any advice I can give you about your being physician to the Hospital, I frankly own it ought to give way to a much better judge, especially so disinterested a one as Dr. Heberden. I love refusals no more than you do. But as to your fears of effluvia, I maintain that one sick rich patient has more of pestilence and putrefaction about him than a whole ward of sick poor.

The similitude between the Italian republics and those of ancient Greece has often struck me, as it does you. I do not wonder that Sully's Memoirs have highly entertained you; but cannot

† The reason of Mr. Gray's changing his college, which is here only glanced at, was in few words this: Two or three young men of fortune, who lived in the same staircase, had for some time intentionally disturbed him with their riots, and carried their ill behaviour so far as frequently to awaken him at midnight. After having borne with their insults longer than might reasonably have been expected even from a man of less warmth of temper, Mr. Gray complained to the governing part of the Society, and not thinking that his remonstrance was sufficiently attended to, quitted the college. The slight manner in which he mentions this affair, when writing to one of his most intimate friends, certainly does honour to the placability of his disposition.

‡ Foundress of the college.

agree with you in thinking him or his master two of the best men in the world. The king was indeed one of the best-natured men that ever lived; but it is owing only to chance that his intended marriage with madame d'Estrées, or with the marquise de Verneuil, did not involve him and the kingdom in the most inextricable confusion; and his design upon the princess of Condé (in his old age) was worse still. As to the minister, his base application to Concini, after the murder of Henry, has quite ruined him in my esteem, and destroyed all the merit of that honest, surly pride for which I honoured him before; yet I own that, as kings and ministers go, they were both extraordinary men. Pray look at the end of Birch's State Papers of sir J. Edmonds, for the character of the French court at that time; it is written by sir George Carew.

You should have received Mason's present* last Saturday. I desire you to tell me your critical opinion of the new Odes, and also whether you have found out two lines which he has inserted in his third to a friend, which are superlative†. We do not expect the world, which is just going to be invaded, will bestow much attention to them; if you hear any thing, you will tell us.

LETTER LXXII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

June 14, 1756.

THOUGH I allow abundance for your kindness and partiality to me, I am yet much pleased with the good opinion you seem to have of The Bard; I have not, however, done a word more than the little you have seen, having been in a very listless, unpleasant, and *inutile* state of mind for this long time, for which I shall beg you to prescribe me somewhat strengthening and agglutinant, lest it turn to a confirmed pthisis.

I recommend two little French books to you, one called *Memoires de M. de la Porte*; it has all the air of simplicity and

truth, and contains some very few extraordinary facts relating to Anne of Austria and cardinal Mazarine. The other is in two small volumes, *Memoires de Madame Staal*. The facts are no great matter, but the manner and vivacity make them interesting. She was a sort of confidante to the late duchess of Maine, and imprisoned a long time on her account during the regency.

I ought before now to have thanked you for your kind offer, which I mean soon to accept, for a reason which, to be sure, can be none to you and Mrs. Wharton; and therefore I think it my duty to give you notice of it. I have told you already of my mental ailments; and it is a very possible thing also that I may be bodily ill again in town, which I would not choose to be in a dirty inconvenient lodging, where, perhaps, my nurse might stifle me with a pillow; and therefore it is no wonder if I prefer your house: but I tell you of this in time, that if either of you are frightened at the thoughts of a sick body, you may make a handsome excuse and save yourselves this trouble. You are not, however, to imagine my illness is *in esse*; no, it is only *in posse*; otherwise I should be scrupulous of bringing it home to you. I think I shall be with you in about a fortnight.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Stoké, July 25, 1756.

I FEEL a contrition for my long silence; and yet perhaps it is the last thing you trouble your head about. Nevertheless, I will be as sorry as if you took it ill. I am sorry too to see you so punctilious as to stand upon answers, and never to come near me till I have regularly left my name at your door, like a mercer's wife that imitates people who go a-visiting. I would forgive you this, if you could possibly suspect I were doing any thing that I liked better; for then your formality might look like being piqued at my negligence, which has somewhat in it like kindness: but you know I am at Stoke, hearing, seeing, doing absolutely nothing. Not such a nothing as you do at Tunbridge, chequered and diversified with a succession of fleeting colours;

* The four Odes which Mr. Mason had just published separately.

† While through the west, where sinks the crimson day,
Meek Twilight slowly sails, and waves her banners gray.

but heavy, lifeless, without form and void; sometimes almost as black as the moral of Voltaire's *Lisbon**, which angers you so. I have had no more muscular inflations, and am only troubled with this depression of mind. You will not expect, therefore, I should give you any account of my *Verve*, which is at best (you know) of so delicate a constitution, and has such weak nerves as not to stir out of its chamber above three days in a year. But I shall inquire after yours, and why it is off again? It has certainly worse nerves than mine, if your Reviewers have frightened it. Sure I (not to mention a score of your other critics) am something a better judge than all the men-midwives and presbyterian parsons† that ever were born. Pray give me leave to ask you, do you find yourself tickled with the commendations of such people? (for you have your share of these too:) I dare say not; your vanity has certainly a better taste. And can then the censure of such critics move you? I own it is an impertinence in these gentry to talk of one at all, either in good or in bad; but this we must all swallow: I mean not only we that write, but all the *we's* that ever did any thing to be talked of.

While I am writing I receive yours, and rejoice to find that the genial influences of this fine season, which produce nothing in me, have hatched high and unimaginable fantasies in you‡. I see, methinks, as I sit on Snowdon, some glimpse of Mona and her haunted shades, and hope we shall be very good neighbours. Any Druidical anecdotes that I can meet with, I will be sure to send you when I return to Cambridge; but I cannot pretend to be learned without books, or to know the Druids from modern bishops at this distance. I can only tell you not to go and take Mona for the Isle of Man: it is Anglesey, a tract of plain country, very fertile, but picturesque only from the view it has of Caernarvonshire, from which it is separated by the Menai, a narrow arm of the sea. Forgive me for supposing in you such a want of erudition.

* His poem *Sur la Destruction de Lisbon*, published about that time.

† The reviewers, at the time, were supposed to be of these professions.

‡ Mr. Mason had sent him his first idea of Caractacus, drawn out in a short argument.

I congratulate you on our glorious successes in the Mediterranean. Shall we go in time, and hire a house together in Switzerland? It is a fine poetical country to look at, and nobody there will understand a word we say or write.

LETTER LXXIV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Cambridge, May, 1757.

You are so forgetful of me that I should not forgive it, but that I suppose Caractacus may be the better for it. Yet I hear nothing from him neither, in spite of his promises: there is no faith in man, no not in a Welchman; and yet Mr. Parry§ has been here, and scratched out such ravishing blind harmony, such tunes of a thousand years old, with names enough to choak you, as have set all this learned body a-dancing, and inspired them with due reverence for my old Bard his countryman, whenever he shall appear. Mr. Parry, you must know, has put my Ode in motion again, and has brought it at last to a conclusion. It is to him, therefore, that you owe the treat which I send you inclosed; namely, the breast and merry-thought, and rump too of the chicken which I have been chewing so long, that I would give the world for neck-beef or cow-heel.

You will observe, in the beginning of this thing, some alteration of a few words, partly for improvement, and partly to avoid repetitions of like words and rhymes; yet I have not got rid of them all; the six last lines of the fifth stanza are new; tell me whether they will do. I am well aware of many weakly things towards the conclusion, but I hope the end itself will do; give me your full and true opinion, and that not upon deliberation, but forthwith. Mr. Hurd himself allows that *lion port* is not too bold for queen Elizabeth.

I have got the old Scotch ballad on which Douglas was founded; it is divine, and as long as from hence to Aston. Have you never seen it? Aristotle's best rules are observed in it, in a manner that shews the author had never read Aristotle. It begins in the fifth act of the play: you

§ A capital performer on the Welch harp, and who was either born blind, or had been so from his infancy.

may read it two-thirds through without guessing what it is about : and yet, when you come to the end, it is impossible not to understand the whole story. I send you the two first stanzas.

* * * *

LETTER LXXV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Hurd.*

Stoke, Aug. 25, 1757.

I do not know why you should thank me for what you had a right and title to † ; but attribute it to the excess of your politeness : and the more so, because almost no one else has made me the same compliment. As your acquaintance in the University (you say) do me the honour to *admire*, it would be ungenerous in me not to give them notice, that they are doing a very unfashionable thing ; for all people of condition are agreed not to *admire*, nor even to understand. One very great man, writing to an acquaintance of his and mine, says that he had read them seven or eight times ; and that now, when he next sees him, he shall not have above *thirty questions* to ask. Another (a peer) believes that the last stanza of the second Ode relates to king Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell. Even my friends tell me they do not *succeed*, and write me moving topics of consolation on that head. In short, I have heard of nobody but an actor and a doctor of divinity that profess their esteem for them. Oh yes, a lady of quality (a friend of Mason's), who is a great reader. She knew there was a compliment to Dryden, but never suspected there was any thing said about Shakspeare or Milton, till it was explained to her ; and wishes that there had been titles prefixed to tell what they were about.

From this mention of Mason's name you may think, perhaps, we are great correspondents. No such thing ; I have not heard from him these two months. I will be sure to scold in my own name, as well as in yours. I rejoice to hear you are so ripe for the press, and so voluminous ; not for my own sake only, whom you flatter with the hopes of seeing your labours both public and private, but for yours too ; for to be employed is to be

* Afterwards bishop of Worcester.

† A present of his two Pindaric Odes, just then published.

happy. This principle of mine (and I am convinced of its truth) has, as usual, no influence on my practice. I am alone, and *ennuyé* to the last degree, yet do nothing : indeed I have one excuse ; my health (which you have so kindly inquired after) is not extraordinary, ever since I came hither. It is no great malady, but several little ones, that seem brewing no good to me. It will be a particular pleasure to me to hear whether Content dwells in Leicestershire, and how she entertains herself there. Only do not be too happy, nor forget entirely the quiet ugliness of Cambridge.

LETTER LXXVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Cambridge, Dec. 12, 1757.

A LIFE spent out of the world has its hours of despondence, its inconveniences, its sufferings, as numerous and as real, though not quite of the same sort, as a life spent in the midst of it. The power we have, when we will exert it over our own minds, joined to a little strength and consolation, nay, a little pride we catch from those that seem to love us, is our only support in either of these conditions. I am sensible I cannot return you more of this assistance than I have received from you ; and can only tell you, that one, who has far more reason than you, I hope, ever will have to look on life with something worse than indifference, is yet no enemy to it ; but can look backward on many bitter moments, partly with satisfaction, and partly with patience ; and forward too on a scene not very promising, with some hope, and some expectations of a better day. The cause, however, which occasioned your reflection (though I can judge but very imperfectly of it), does not seem, at present, to be weighty enough to make you take any such resolution as you meditate. Use it in its season, as a relief from what is tiresome to you, but not as if it was in consequence of any thing you take ill ; on the contrary, if such a thing had happened at the time of your transmigration, I would defer it merely to avoid that appearance.

As to myself, I cannot boast, at present, either of my spirits, my situation, my employments, or fertility. The days and the nights pass, and I am never the

nearer to any thing, but that one to which we are all tending; yet I love people that leave some traces of their journey behind them, and have strength enough to advise you to do so while you can. I expect to see Caratacus completed, and therefore I send you the books you wanted. I do not know whether they will furnish you with any new matter; but they are well enough written, and easily read. I told you before, that (in a time of dearth) I would borrow from the Edda, without entering too minutely on particulars; but if I did so, I would make each image so clear, that it might be fully understood by itself; for in this obscure mythology we must not hint at things, as we do with the Greek fables, that every body is supposed to know at school. However, on second thoughts, I think it would be still better to graft any wild picturesque fable, absolutely of one's own invention, on the Druid stock; I mean on those half dozen of old fancies that are known to be a part of their system. This will give you more freedom and latitude, and will leave no hold for the critics to fasten on.

I send you back the elegy*, as you desired me to do. My advices are always at your service to take or to refuse, therefore you should not call them severe. You know I do not love, much less pique myself on criticism; and think even a bad verse as good a thing or better than the best observation that ever was made upon it. I like greatly the spirit and sentiment of it (much of which you perhaps owe to your present train of thinking): the disposition of the whole too is natural and elegiac; as to the expression, I would venture to say (did not you forbid me) that it is sometimes too easy. The last line I protest against (this, you will say, is worse than blotting out rhymes); the descriptive part is excellent.

Pray, when did I pretend to finish, or even insert passages into other people's works, as if it were equally easy to pick holes and to mend them? All I can say is, that your elegy must not end with the worst line in it. It is flat; it is prose; whereas that, above all, ought to sparkle, or at least to shine. If the sentiment must stand, twirl it into an apophthegm; stick a flower in it; gild it

with a costly expression; let it strike the fancy, the ear, or the heart, and I am satisfied.

The other particular expressions which I object to, I mark on the manuscript. Now, I desire you would neither think me severe, nor at all regard what I say further than as it coincides with your own judgment; for the child deserves your partiality; it is a healthy well-made boy, with an ingenuous countenance, and promises to live long. I would only wash its face, dress it a little, make it walk upright and strong, and keep it from learning *paw* words.

I hope you couched my refusal† to lord John Cavendish in as respectful terms as possible, and with all due acknowledgments to the duke. If you hear who it is to be given to, pray let me know; for I interest myself a little in the history of it, and rather wish somebody may accept it that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Rowe was, I think, the last man of character that had it; Eusden was a person of great hopes in his youth, though at last he turned out a drunken parson; Dryden was as disgraceful to the office, from his character, as the poorest scribbler could have been from his verses.

LETTER LXXVII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

February 21, 1758.

WOULD you know what I am doing? I doubt you have been told already, and hold my employments cheap enough; but every one must judge of his own capability, and cut his amusements according to his disposition. The drift of my present studies is to know, wherever I am, what lies within reach that may be worth seeing, whether it be building, ruin, park, garden, prospect, picture, or monument; to whom it doth or has belonged, and what has been the characteristic and taste of different ages. You will say this is the

† Of being poet-laureat on the death of Cibber, which place the late duke of Devonshire (then lord chamberlain) desired his brother to offer to Mr. Gray; and his lordship had commissioned Mr. Mason (then in town) to write to him concerning it.

† Elegy in the Garden of a Friend.

object of all antiquaries ; but pray what antiquary ever saw these objects in the same light, or desired to know them for a like reason ? In short, say what you please, I am persuaded whenever my list is finished you will approve it, and think it of no small use. My spirits are very near the freezing point ; and for some hours of the day this exercise, by its warmth and gentle motion, serves to raise them a few degrees higher.

I hope the misfortune that has befallen Mrs. Cibber's canary bird will not be the ruin of Agis : it is probable you will have curiosity enough to see it, as it is by the author of Douglas.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, March 8, 1758.

It is indeed for want of spirits, as you suspect, that my studies lie among the cathedrals, and the tombs, and the ruins. To think, though to little purpose, has been the chief amusement of my days ; and when I would not, or cannot think, I dream. At present I feel myself able to write a catalogue, or to read the Peerage book, or Miller's Gardening Dictionary, and am thankful that there are such employments and such authors in the world. Some people, who hold me cheap for this, are doing perhaps what is not half so well worth while. As to posterity, I may ask (with somebody whom I have forgot), what has it ever done to oblige me ?

To make a transition from myself to as poor a subject, the tragedy of Agis : I cry to think that it should be by the author of Douglas : why, it is all modern Greek ; the story is an antique statue painted white and red, frizzed, and dressed in a negligée made by a Yorkshire mantua-maker. Then here is the Miscellany (Mr. Dodsley has sent me the whole set gilt and lettered ; I thank him). Why, the two last volumes are worse than the four first ; particularly Dr. Akenside is in a deplorable way. What signifies learning and the ancients (Mason will say triumphantly) ; why should people read Greek to lose their imagination, their ear, and their mother tongue ? But then there is Mr. Shenstone, who trusts to nature and simple sentiment, why

does he do no better ? He goes hopping along his own gravel walks, and never deviates from the beaten paths for fear of being lost.

I have read Dr. Swift, and am disappointed*. There is nothing of the negotiations that I have not seen better in M. de Torcy before. The manner is careless, and has little to distinguish it from common writers. I meet with nothing to please me but the spiteful characters of the opposite party and its leaders. I expected much more secret history.

LETTER LXXIX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Stonehewer.

Cambridge, August 13, 1758.

I AM as sorry as you seem to be, that our acquaintance harped so much on the subject of materialism, when I saw him with you in town, because it was plain to which side of the long-debated question he inclined. That we are indeed mechanical and dependent beings, I need no other proof than my own feelings ; and from the same feelings I learn, with equal conviction, that we are not merely such ; that there is a power within that struggles against the force and bias of that mechanism, commands its motion, and, by frequent practice, reduces it to that ready obedience which we call habit ; and all this in conformity to a preconceived opinion (no matter whether right or wrong), to that least material of all agents, a thought. I have known many in his case, who, while they thought they were conquering an old prejudice, did not perceive they were under the influence of one far more dangerous ; one that furnishes us with a ready apology for all our worst actions, and opens to us a full license for doing whatever we please ; and yet these very people were not at all the more indulgent to other men (as they naturally should have been) : their indignation to such as offended them, their desire of revenge on any body that hurt them, was nothing mitigated : in short, the truth is, they wished to be persuaded of that opinion for the sake of its convenience, but were not so in their heart ; and they would have been

* His History of the four last years of Queen Anne.

glad (as they ought in common prudence), that nobody else should think the same, for fear of the mischief that might ensue to themselves. His French author I never saw, but have read fifty in the same strain, and shall read no more. I can be wretched enough without them. They put me in mind of the Greek sophist, that got immortal honour by discoursing so feelingly on the miseries of our condition, that fifty of his audience went home and hanged themselves; yet he lived himself (I suppose) many years after in very good plight.

You say you cannot conceive how lord Shaftesbury came to be a philosopher in vogue; I will tell you: 1st, he was a lord; 2dly, he was as vain as any of his readers; 3dly, men are very prone to believe what they do not understand; 4thly, they will believe any thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to believe it; 5thly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads nowhere; 6thly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and seemed always to mean more than he said. Would you have any more reasons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well destroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks but with commoners: vanity is no longer interested in the matter, for the new road is become an old one. The mode of free-thinking is like that of ruffs and farthingales, and has given place to the mode of not thinking at all; once it was reckoned graceful, half to discover and half conceal the mind, but now we have been long accustomed to see it quite naked: primness and affectation of style, like the good-breeding of queen Anne's court, has turned to hoydening and rude familiarity.

LETTER LXXX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Wharton.

Sunday, April 9, 1753.

I AM equally sensible of your affliction*, and of your kindness, that made you think of me at such a moment: would to God I could lessen the one, or requite the other with that consolation which I have often received from you when I most wanted it! but your grief is too just, and

the cause of it too fresh to admit of any such endeavour: what, indeed, is all human consolation? Can it efface every little amiable word or action of an object we loved, from our memory? Can it convince us, that all the hopes we had entertained, the plans of future satisfaction we had formed, were ill-grounded and vain, only because we have lost them? The only comfort (I am afraid) that belongs to our condition, is to reflect (when time has given us leisure for reflection) that others have suffered worse; or that we ourselves might have suffered the same misfortune at times and in circumstances that would probably have aggravated our sorrow. You might have seen this poor child arrived at an age to fulfil all your hopes, to attach you more strongly to him by long habit, by esteem, as well as natural affection, and that towards the decline of your life, when we most stand in need of support, and when he might chance to have been your only support; and then by some unforeseen and deplorable accident, or some painful lingering distemper, you might have lost him. Such has been the fate of many an unhappy father. I know there is a sort of tenderness which infancy and innocence alone produce; but I think you must own the other to be a stronger and a more overwhelming sorrow. Let me then beseech you to try, by every method of avocation and amusement, whether you cannot, by degrees, get the better of that dejection of spirits, which inclines you to see every thing in the worst light possible, and throws a sort of a voluntary gloom, not only over your present, but future days; as if even your situation now were not preferable to that of thousands round you; and as if your prospect hereafter might not open as much of happiness to you as to any person you know: the condition of our life perpetually instructs us to be rather slow to hope, as well as to despair; and (I know you will forgive me, if I tell you) you are often a little too hasty in both, perhaps from constitution. It is sure we have great power over our own minds, when we choose to exert it; and though it be difficult to resist the mechanic impulse and bias of our own temper, it is yet possible, and still more so, to delay those resolutions it inclines us to take, which we almost always have cause to repent.

* Occasioned by the death of his eldest (and at that time his only) son.

You tell me nothing of Mrs. Wharton's or your own state of health: I will not talk to you more upon this subject till I hear you are both well; for that is the grand point, and without it we may as well not think at all. You flatter me in thinking that any thing I can do* could at all alleviate the just concern your loss has given you; but I cannot flatter myself so far, and know how little qualified I am at present to give any satisfaction to myself on this head, and in this way, much less to you. I by no means pretend to inspiration; but yet I affirm, that the faculty in question is by no means voluntary; it is the result (I suppose) of a certain disposition of mind, which does not depend on one's self, and which I have not felt this long time. You, that are a witness how seldom this spirit has moved me in my life, may easily give credit to what I say.

LETTER LXXXI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Palgrave†.

Stoke, Sept. 6, 1758.

I do not know how to make you amends, having neither rock, ruin, nor precipice, near me to send you; they do not grow in the south; but only say the word, if you would have a compact neat box of red brick with sash windows, or a grotto made of flints and shell work, or a walnut tree with three mole hills under it, stuck with honeysuckles round a bason of gold fishes, and you shall be satisfied; they shall come by the Edinburgh coach.

In the mean time I congratulate you on your new acquaintance with the savage, the rude, and the tremendous. Pray tell me, is it any thing like what you had read in your book, or seen in two shilling prints? Do not you think a man may be the wiser (I had almost said the better) for going a hundred or two of miles; and that the mind has more room in it than most people seem to think, if you will but furnish the apartments? I almost envy your last month, being in a very insipid situation myself: and desire you would not fail to send me some furniture for my Gothic

* His friend had requested him to write an epitaph on the child.

† Rector of Palgrave and Thrandeston in Suffolk. He was making a tour in Scotland when this letter was written to him.

apartment, which is very cold at present. It will be the easier task, as you have nothing to do but transcribe your little red books, if they are not rubbed out; for I conclude you have not trusted every thing to memory, which is ten times worse than a lead pencil: half a word fixed upon or near a spot, is worth a cart load of recollection. When we trust to the picture that objects draw of themselves on our minds, we deceive ourselves; without accurate and particular observation, it is but ill-drawn at first, the outlines are soon blurred, the colours every day grow fainter; and at last, when we would produce it to any body, we are forced to supply its defects with a few strokes of our own imagination. God forgive me, I suppose I have done so myself before now, and misled many a good body that put their trust in me. Pray, tell me (but with permission, and without any breach of hospitality), is it so much warmer on the other side of the Swale (as some people of honour say) than it is here? Has the singing of birds, the bleating of sheep, the lowing of herds, deafened you at Rainton? Did the vast old oaks and thick groves in Northumberland keep off the sun too much from you? I am too civil to extend my inquiries beyond Berwick. Every thing, doubtless, must improve upon you as you advance northward. You must tell me, though, about Melross, Rosslin Chapel, and Arbroath. In short, your *portfeuille* must be so full, that I only desire a loose chapter or two, and will wait for the rest till it comes out.

LETTER LXXXII.

From the same to the same.

London, July 24, 1759.

I AM now settled in my new territories, commanding Bedford gardens, and all the fields as far as Highgate and Hampstead, with such a concourse of moving pictures as would astonish you; so *rus-in-urbe-ish*, that I believe I shall stay here, except little excursions and vagaries, for a year to come. What though I am separated from the fashionable world by Broad St. Giles's, and many a dirty court and alley, yet here is air, and sunshine, and quiet, however, to comfort you: I shall confess that I am basking with heat all the summer, and I suppose shall be

blown down all the winter, besides being robbed every night; I trust, however, that the Museum, with all its manuscripts and rarities by the cart-load, will make ample amends for all the aforesaid inconveniencies.

I this day passed through the jaws of a great leviathan into the den of Dr. Templeman, superintendent of the reading-room, who congratulated himself on the sight of so much good company. We were, 1st, a man that writes for lord Royston; 2dly, a man that writes for Dr. Burton, of York; 3dly, a man that writes for the emperor of Germany, or Dr. Pocock, for he speaks the worst English I ever heard; 4thly, Dr. Stukely, who writes for himself, the very worst person he could write for; and lastly, I, who only read to know if there be any thing worth writing, and that not without some difficulty. I find that they printed 1000 copies of the Harleian Catalogue, and have sold only fourscore; that they have 900*l.* a-year income, and spend 1300*l.* and are building apartments for the under-keepers; so I expect in winter to see the collection advertised and set to auction.

Have you read lord Clarendon's Continuation of his History? Do you remember Mr. **'s account of it before it came out? How well he recollected all the faults, and how utterly he forgot all the beauties: surely the grossest taste is better than such a sort of delicacy.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

London, June 22, 1760.

I AM not sorry to hear you are exceedingly busy, except as it has deprived me of the pleasure I should have of hearing often from you; and as it has been occasioned by a little vexation and disappointment. To find one's self business, I am persuaded, is the great art of life; I am never so angry as when I hear my acquaintance wishing they had been bred to some poking profession, or employed in some office of drudgery, as if it were pleasanter to be at the command of other people than at one's own; and as if they could not go unless they were wound up: yet I know and feel what they mean by this complaint; it proves that some spirit, something of genius (more than

common) is required to teach a man how to employ himself: I say a man; for women, commonly speaking, never feel this distemper, they have always something to do; time hangs not on their hands (unless they be fine ladies); a variety of small inventions and occupations fill up the void, and their eyes are never open in vain.

As to myself, I have again found rest for the sole of my gouty foot in your old dining-room*, and hope that you will find at least an equal satisfaction at Old Park; if your bog prove as comfortable as my oven, I shall see no occasion to pity you, and only wish you may brew no worse than I bake.

You totally mistake my talents, when you impute to me any magical skill in planting roses: I know I am no conjurer in these things; when they are done I can find fault, and that is all. Now this is the very reverse of genius, and I feel my own littleness. Reasonable people know themselves better than is commonly imagined; and therefore (though I never saw any instance of it) I believe Mason when he tells me that he understands these things. The prophetic eye of taste (as Mr. Pitt called it) sees all the beauties that a place is susceptible of, long before they are born; and when it plants a seedling, already sits under the shadow of it, and enjoys the effect it will have from every point of view that lies in prospect. You must therefore invoke Caractacus, and he will send his spirits from the top of Snowdon to Cross-fall or Warden-law.

I am much obliged to you for your antique news. Froissard is a favourite book of mine (though I have not attentively read him, but only dipped here and there); and it is strange to me that people, who would give thousands for a dozen portraits (originals of that time) to furnish a gallery, should never cast an eye on so many moving pictures of the life, actions, manners, and thoughts of their ancestors, done on the spot, and in strong, though simple colours. In the succeeding century Froissard, I find, was read with great satisfaction by every body that could read; and on the same

* The house in Southampton Row, where Mr. Gray lodged, had been tenanted by Dr. Wharton; who, on account of his ill health, left London the year before, and was removed to his paternal estate at Old Park, near Durham.

footing with king Arthur, sir Tristram, and archbishop Turpin; not because they thought him a fabulous writer, but because they took them all for true and authentic historians; to so little purpose was it in that age for a man to be at the pains of writing truth. Pray, are you come to the four Irish kings, that went to school to king Richard the Second's master of the ceremonies, and the man who informed Froissard of all he had seen in St. Patrick's purgatory?

The town are reading the king of Prussia's poetry (*La Philosophie sans Souci*), and I have done like the town; they do not seem so sick of it as I am: it is all the scum of Voltaire and lord Bolingbroke, the *crambe-recoctu* of our worst freethinkers, tossed up in German-French rhyme. Tristram Shandy is still a greater object of admiration, the man as well as the book: one is invited to dinner, where he dined a fortnight before. As to the volumes yet published, there is much good fun in them, and humour sometimes hit and sometimes missed. Have you read his Sermons, with his own comic figure, from a painting by Reynolds, at the head of them? They are in the style I think most proper for the pulpit, and shew a strong imagination and a sensible heart; but you see him often tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of the audience.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Stonehewer.

London, June 29, 1760

THOUGH you have had but a melancholy employment, it is worthy of envy, and (I hope) will have all the success it deserves*. It was the best and most natural method of cure, and such as could not have been administered by any but your gentle hand. I thank you for communicating to me what must give you so much satisfaction.

I too was reading M. D'Alembert, and (like you) am totally disappointed in his Elements. I could only taste a little of the first course: it was dry as a stick, hard as a stone, and cold as a cucumber.

* Mr. Stonehewer was now at Houghton-le-Spring, in the bishoprick of Durham, attending on his sick father, rector of that parish.

But then the letter to Rousseau is like himself: and the discourses on elocution, and on the liberty of music, are divine. He has added to his translations from Tacitus; and (what is remarkable) though that author's manner more nearly resembles the best French writers of the present age, than any thing, he totally fails in the attempt. Is it his fault, or that of the language?

I have received another Scotch packet with a third specimen, inferior in kind (because it is merely description), but yet full of nature and noble wild imagination. Five bards pass the night at the castle of a chief (himself a principal bard); each goes in his turn to observe the face of things, and returns with an extempore picture of the changes he has seen (it is an October night, the harvest month of the Highlands). This is the whole plan; yet there is a contrivance, and a preparation of ideas, that you would not expect. The oddest thing is, that every one of them sees ghosts (more or less). The idea that struck and surprised me most, is the following. One of them (describing a storm of wind and rain) says

Ghosts ride on the tempest to-night!
Sweet is their voice between the gusts of wind;
Their songs are of other worlds!

Did you never observe (while rocking winds are piping loud) that pause, as the gust is recollecting itself, and rising upon the ear in a shrill and plaintive note, like the swell of an Æolian harp? I do assure you there is nothing in the world so like the voice of a spirit. Thomson had an ear sometimes: he was not deaf to this; and has described it gloriously, but given it another different turn, and of more horror. I cannot repeat the lines: it is in his Winter. There is another very fine picture in one of them. It describes the breaking of the clouds after the storm, before it is settled into a calm, and when the moon is seen by short intervals.

The waves are tumbling on the lake,
And lash the rocky sides:
The boat is brimful in the cove,
The oars on the rocking tide.
Sad sits a maid beneath a cliff,
And eyes the rolling stream:
Her lover promised to come:
She saw his boat (when it was evening) on the lake;
Are these his groans in the gale?
Is this his broken boat on the shore?

LETTER LXXXV.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Clarke.*

Pembroke Hall, Aug. 12, 1760.

Nor knowing whether you are yet returned from your sea water, I write at random to you. For me, I am come to my resting place, and find it very necessary, after living for a month in a house with three women that laughed from morning to night, and would allow nothing to the sulkiness of my disposition. Company and cards at home, parties by land and water abroad, and (what they call) doing something, that is, racketing about from morning to night, are occupations, I find, that wear out my spirits, especially in a situation where one might sit still, and be alone with pleasure; for the place was a hill† like Clifden, opening to a very extensive and diversified landscape, with the Thames, which is navigable, running at its foot.

I would wish to continue here (in a very different scene, it must be confessed) till Michaelmas; but I fear I must come to town much sooner. Cambridge is a delight of a place, now there is nobody in it. I do believe you would like it, if you knew what it was without inhabitants. It is they, I assure you, that get it an ill name and spoil all. Our friend Dr. — (one of its nuisances) is not expected here again in a hurry. He is gone to his grave with five fine mackarel (large and full of roe) in his belly. He ate them all at one dinner: but his fare was a turbot on Trinity Sunday, of which he left little for the company besides bones. He had not been hearty all the week! but after this sixth fish he never held up his head more, and a violent looseness carried him off. They say he made a very good end.

Have you seen the Erse fragments since they were printed? I am more puzzled than ever about their antiquity, though I still incline (against every body's opinion) to believe them old. Those you have already seen are the best; though there are some others that are excellent too.

* Physician at Epsom. With this gentleman Mr. Gray commenced an early acquaintance at College.

† Near Henley.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Cambridge, Aug. 20, 1760.

I HAVE sent Musæus back as you desired me, scratched here and there; and with it also a bloody satire, written against no less persons than you and I by name. I concluded at first it was Mr. **, because he is your friend and my humble servant; but then I thought he knew the world too well to call us the favourite minions of taste and fashion, especially as to odes. For to them his ridicule is confined; so it is not he, but Mr. Colman, nephew to lady Bath, author of the Connoisseur, a member of one of the inns of court, and a particular acquaintance of Mr. Garrick. What have you done to him? for I never heard his name before; he makes very tolerable fun with me where I understand him (which is not everywhere); but seems more angry with you. Lest people should not understand the humour of the thing (which indeed to do they must have our lyricisms at their finger-ends), letters come out in Lloyd's Evening Post to tell them who and what it was that he meant, and says it is like to produce a great combustion in the literary world. So if you have any mind to *combustle* about it, well and good; for me, I am neither so literary nor so combustible. The Monthly Review, I see, just now has much stuff about us on this occasion. It says one of us at least has always borne his faculties meekly. I leave you to guess which of us that is; I think I know. You simpleton you! you must be meek, must you? and see what you get by it.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

London, 1761.

I REJOICE to find that you not only grow reconciled to your northern scene, but discover beauties round you that once were deformities: I am persuaded the whole matter is to have always something going forward. Happy they that can create a rose tree, or erect a honeysuckle; that can watch the brood of a hen, or see a fleet of their own ducklings launch into the water: it is with a sentiment of envy I speak it, who never shall

have even a thatched roof of my own, nor gather a strawberry but in Covent-Garden. I will not, however, believe in the vocality of Old-Park till next summer, when perhaps I may trust to my own ears.

The *Nouvelle Heloise* cruelly disappointed me; but it has its partisans, amongst which are Mason and Mr. Hurd: for me, I admire nothing but Fingal (I conclude you have seen it, if not Stonehewer can lend it you); yet I remain still in doubt about the authenticity of these poems, though inclining rather to believe them genuine in spite of the world; whether they are the inventions of antiquity, or of a modern Scotchman, either case is to me alike unaccountable; *je m'y perds*.

I send you a Swedish and English calendar; the first column is by Berger, a disciple of Linnæus; the second by Mr. Stillingfleet; the third (very imperfect indeed) by me. You are to observe, as you tend your plantations and take your walks, how the spring advances in the north, and whether Old Park most resembles Upsal or Stratton. The latter has on one side a barren black heath, on the other a light sandy loam; all the country about is a dead flat: you see it is necessary you should know the situation (I do not mean any reflection upon any body's place); and this is the description Mr. Stillingfleet gives of his friend Mr. Marsham's seat, to which he retires in the summer, and botanizes. I have lately made an acquaintance with this philosopher, who lives in a garret here in the winter, that he may support some near relations who depend upon him; he is always employed, consequently (according to my old maxim) always happy, always cheerful, and seems to me a very worthy honest man: his present scheme is to send some persons properly qualified to reside a year or two in Attica, to make themselves acquainted with the climate, productions, and natural history of the country, that we may understand Aristotle, Theophrastus, &c. who have been Heathen Greek to us for so many ages; and this he has got proposed to lord Bute, no unlikely person to put it into execution, as he is himself a botanist.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

August, 1761.

BE assured your York canon never will die; so the better the thing is in value, the worse for you*. The true way to immortality is to get you nominated one's successor: age and diseases vanish at your name; fevers turn to radical heat, and fistulas to issues: it is a judgment that waits on your insatiable avarice. You could not let the poor old man die at his ease, when he was about it; and all his family (I suppose) are cursing you for it.

I wrote to lord — on his recovery; and he answers me very cheerfully, as if his illness had been but slight, and the pleurisy were no more than a hole in one's stocking. He got it (he says) not by scampering, racketing, and riding post, as I had supposed; but by going with ladies to Vauxhall. He is the picture (and pray so tell him, if you see him) of an old alderman that I knew, who, after living forty years on the fat of the land (not milk and honey, but arrack, punch, and venison), and losing his great toe with a mortification, said to the last, that he owed it to two grapes, which he ate one day after dinner. He felt them lie cold at his stomach, the minute they were down.

Mr. Montagu (as I guess, at your instigation) has earnestly desired me to write some lines to be put on a monument, which he means to erect at Bellisle. It is a task I do not love, knowing sir William Williams so slightly as I did: but he is so friendly a person, and his affliction seemed to me so real, that I could not refuse him. I have sent him the following verses, which I neither like myself, nor will he, I doubt; however, I have shewed him that I wished to oblige him. Tell me your real opinion.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Cambridge, Dec. 4, 1762.

I FEEL very ungrateful every day that I continue silent; and yet now that I take

* This was written at a time, when, by the favour of Dr. Fountayne, dean of York, Mr. Mason expected to be made a residentiary in his cathedral.

my pen in hand, I have only time to tell you, that of all the places which I saw in my return from you, Hardwicke pleased me the most*. One would think that Mary Queen of Scots was but just walked down into the park with her guard for half an hour: her gallery, her room of audience, her ante-chamber, with the very canopies, chair of state, foot-stool, *lit de repos*, oratory, carpets, and hangings, just as she left them; a little tattered indeed, but the more venerable; and all preserved with religious care, and papered up in winter.

When I arrived in London, I found professor Turner† had been dead above a fortnight; and being cockered and spirited up by some friends (though it was rather the latest) I got my name suggested to lord Bute. You may easily imagine who undertook it, and indeed he did it with zeal‡. I received my answer very soon, which was what you may easily imagine, but joined with great professions of his desire to serve me on future occasions, and many more fine words that I pass over, not out of modesty, but for another reason: so you see I have made my fortune like sir Francis Wronghead. This nothing is a profound secret, and no one here suspects it even now. To-day I hear Mr. E. Delaval§ has got it, but we are not yet certain; next to myself I wished for him.

You see we have made a peace. I shall be silent about it, because if I say any thing anti-ministerial, you will tell me you know the reason; and if I approve it, you will think I have my expectations still. All I know is, that the duke of Newcastle and lord Hardwicke both say it is an excellent peace, and only Mr. Pitt calls it inglorious and insidious.

* A seat of the duke of Devonshire, in Derbyshire.

† Professor of modern languages in the university of Cambridge.

‡ This person was the late sir Henry Erskine. The place in question was given to the tutor of sir James Lowther.

§ Fellow of Pembroke-Hall, and of the Royal Society.

LETTER XC.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Pembroke-Hall, Aug 26, 1766.

WHATEVER my pen may do, I am sure my thoughts expatiate nowhere oftener, or with more pleasure, than to Old-Park. I hope you have made my peace with the angry little lady. It is certain, whether her name were in my letter or not, she was as present to my memory as the rest of the whole family; and I desire you would present her with two kisses in my name, and one apiece to all the others; for I shall take the liberty to kiss them all (great and small), as you are to be my proxy.

In spite of the rain, which I think continued, with very short intervals, till the beginning of this month, and quite effaced the summer from the year, I made a shift to pass May and June not disagreeably in Kent. I was surprised at the beauty of the road to Canterbury, which (I know not why) had not struck me before. The whole country is a rich and well-cultivated garden; orchards, cherry grounds, hop gardens, intermixed with corn and frequent villages; gentle risings covered with wood, and everywhere the Thames and Medway breaking in upon the landscape with all their navigation. It was indeed owing to the bad weather that the whole scene was dressed in that tender emerald green, which one usually sees only for a fortnight in the opening of the spring; and this continued till I left the country. My residence was eight miles east of Canterbury, in a little quiet valley on the skirts of Barham Down||. In these parts the whole soil is chalk; and whenever it holds up, in half an hour it is dry enough to walk out. I took the opportunity of three or four days fine weather to go into the Isle of Thanet; saw Margate (which is Bartholomew-fair by the sea-side), Ramsgate, and other places there; and so came by Sandwich, Deal, Dover, Folkstone, and Hithe, back again. The coast is not like Hartlepool; there are no rocks, but only chalky cliffs of no great height till you come to Dover; there indeed they are noble and picturesque, and the opposite coasts of France begin to bound your view, which was left before to range

|| At Denton, where his friend the rev. William Robinson, brother to Matthew Robinson, esq. late member for Canterbury, then resided.

unlimited by any thing but the horizon ; yet it is by no means a shipless sea, but everywhere peopled with white sails, and vessels of all sizes in motion : and take notice (except in the Isle, which is all corn-fields, and has very little inclosure) there are in all places hedge-rows, and tall trees even within a few yards of the beach. Particularly, Hithe stands on an eminence covered with wood. I shall confess we had fires at night (ay and at day too) several times in June ; but do not go and take advantage in the north at this, for it was the most untoward year that ever I remember.

My compliments to Mrs. Wharton and all your family : I will not name them, lest I should affront any body.

LETTER XCI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

March 28, 1767.

I BREAK in upon you at a moment, when we least of all are permitted to disturb our friends, only to say, that you are daily and hourly present to my thoughts. If the worst be not yet past, you will neglect and pardon me : but if the last struggle be over ; if the poor object of your long anxieties be no longer sensible to your kindness, or to her own sufferings, allow me (at least in idea, for what could I do, were I present, more than this ?) to sit by you in silence, and pity from my heart not her, who is at rest, but you, who lose her. May He, who made us, the Master of our pleasures and of our pains, preserve and support you ! Adieu.

I have long understood how little you had to hope.

LETTER XCII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Beattie.

Old Park, near Darlington, Durham,
August 12, 1767.

I RECEIVED from Mr. Williamson that very obliging mark you were pleased to give me of your remembrance : had I not entertained some slight hopes of revisiting Scotland this summer, and consequently of seeing you at Aberdeen, I had sooner acknowledged, by letter, the favour you have done me. Those hopes are now at an end : but I do not there-

fore despair of seeing again a country that has given me so much pleasure ; nor of telling you, in person, how much I esteem you and (as you choose to call them) your amusements : the specimen of them, which you were so good as to send me, I think excellent ; the sentiments are such as a melancholy imagination naturally suggests in solitude and silence, and that (though light and business may suspend or banish them at times) return with but so much the greater force upon a feeling heart ; the diction is elegant and unconstrained : not loaded with epithets and figures, nor flagging into prose : the versification is easy and harmonious. My only objection is——

You see, sir, I take the liberty you indulged me in, when I first saw you ; and therefore I make no excuses for it, but desire you would take your revenge on me in kind.

I have read over (but too hastily) Mr. Ferguson's book. There are uncommon strains of eloquence in it ; and I was surprised to find not one single idiom of his country (I think) in the whole work. He has not the fault you mention : his application to the heart is frequent, and often successful. His love of Montesquieu and Tacitus has led him into a manner of writing too short-winded and sententious ; which those great men, had they lived in better times, and under a better government, would have avoided.

I know no pretence that I have to the honour lord Gray is pleased to do me* : but if his lordship chooses to own me, it certainly is not my business to deny it. I say not this merely on account of his quality, but because he is a very worthy and accomplished person. I am truly sorry for the great loss he has had since I left Scotland. If you should chance to see him, I will beg you to present my respectful humble service to his lordship.

I gave Mr. Williamson all the information I was able in the short time he staid with me. He seemed to answer well the character you gave me of him : but what I chiefly envied in him, was his ability of walking all the way from Aberdeen to Cambridge, and back again ; which if I possessed, you would soon see you obliged, &c.

* Lord Gray had said that Mr. Gray was related to his family.

LETTER XCIII.

Mr. Gray to the Duke of Grafton.

Cambridge, July, 1768.

My lord,

YOUR grace has dealt nobly with me; and the same delicacy of mind that induced you to confer this favour on me, unsolicited and unexpected, may perhaps make you averse to receive my sincerest thanks and grateful acknowledgments. Yet your grace must excuse me, they will have their way: they are indeed but words; yet I know and feel they come from my heart, and therefore are not wholly unworthy of your grace's acceptance. I even flatter myself (such is my pride) that you have some little satisfaction in your own work. If I did not deceive myself in this, it would complete the happiness of, my lord, your grace's most obliged and devoted servant.

LETTER XCIV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.*

Jermyn-street, Aug. 3, 1768.

THAT Mr. Brockett has broken his neck, by a fall from his horse, you will have seen in the newspapers; and also, that I, your humble servant, have kissed the king's hand for his succession: they are both true, but the manner how you know not; only I can assure you that I had no hand at all in his fall, and almost as little in the second event. He died on the Sunday; on Wednesday following, his grace the duke of Grafton wrote me a very polite letter to say, that his majesty had commanded him to offer me the vacant professorship, not only as a reward of, &c. but as a credit to, &c. with much more, too high for me to transcribe: so on Thursday the king signed the warrant, and next day, at his levee, I kissed his hand; he made me several gracious speeches, which I shall not repeat, because every body that goes to court, does so; besides, the day was so hot, and the ceremony so embarrassing to me, that I hardly knew what he said.

Adieu! I am to perish here with heat this fortnight yet, and then to Cambridge;

* Rector of Lounde and Bradwell, in Suffolk. His acquaintance with Mr. Gray commenced a few years before the date of this, when he was a student of Trinity-Hall, Cambridge.

to be sure my dignity is a little the worse for wear, but mended and washed, it will do for me.

LETTER XCV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Beattie.

Pembroke-Hall, Oct. 31, 1768.

IT is some time since I received from Mr. Foulis two copies of my poems, one by the hands of Mr. T. Pitt, the other by Mr. Merrill, a bookseller of this town; it is indeed a most beautiful edition, and must certainly do credit both to him and to me: but I fear it will be of no other advantage to him, as Dodsley has contrived to glut the town already with two editions beforehand, one of fifteen thousand, and the other seven hundred and fifty, both indeed far inferior to that of Glasgow, but sold at half the price. I must repeat my thanks, sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself on my account; and through you I must desire leave to convey my acknowledgments to Mr. Foulis, for the pains and expense he has been at in this publication.

We live at so great a distance, that, perhaps, you may not yet have learned, what, I flatter myself, you will not be displeased to hear: the middle of last summer his majesty was pleased to appoint me regius professor of modern history in this university: it is the best thing the crown has to bestow (on a layman) here; the salary is 400*l.* per ann.; but what enhances the value of it to me is, that it was bestowed without being asked. The person who held it before me, died on the Sunday; and on Wednesday following the duke of Grafton wrote me a letter to say, that the king offered me this office, with many additional expressions of kindness on his grace's part, to whom I am but little known, and whom I have not seen either before or since he did me this favour. Instances of a benefit so nobly conferred, I believe, are rare; and therefore I tell you of it as a thing that does honour, not only to me, but to the minister.

As I lived here before from choice, I shall now continue to do so from obligation: if business or curiosity should call you southwards, you will find few friends that will see you with more cordial satisfaction than, dear sir, &c.

LETTER XCVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.

I WAS absent from College, and did not receive your melancholy letter till my return hither yesterday; so you must not attribute this delay to me, but to accident: to sympathize with you in such a loss* is an easy task for me, but to comfort you not so easy: can I wish to see you unaffected with the sad scene now before your eyes, or with the loss of a person that, through a great part of your life, has proved himself so kind a friend to you? He who best knows our nature (for he made us what we are), by such afflictions recalls us from our wandering thoughts and idle merriment; from the insolence of youth and prosperity, to serious reflection, to our duty, and to himself; nor need we hasten to get rid of these impressions; time (by appointment of the same Power) will cure the smart, and in some hearts soon blot out all the traces of sorrow: but such as preserve them longest (for it is partly left in our own power) do perhaps best acquiesce in the will of the chastiser.

For the consequences of this sudden loss, I see them well, and I think, in a like situation, could fortify my mind, so as to support them with cheerfulness and good hopes, though not naturally inclined to see things in their best aspect. When you have time to turn yourself round, you must think seriously of your profession; you know I would have wished to see you wear the livery of it long ago: but I will not dwell on this subject at present. To be obliged to those we love and esteem is a pleasure; but to serve and oblige them is still greater; and this, with independence (no vulgar blessing), are what a profession at your age may reasonably promise: without it they are hardly attainable. Remember I speak from experience.

In the mean time, while your present situation lasts, which I hope will not be long, continue your kindness and confidence in me, by trusting me with the whole of it; and surely you hazard nothing by so doing: that situation does not appear so new to me as it does to you. You well know the tenor of my conversation (urged at times perhaps a

little farther than you liked) has been intended to prepare you for this event, and to familiarise your mind with this spectre, which you call by its worse name: but remember that "*Honesta res est lata paupertas.*" I see it with respect, and so will every one, whose poverty is not seated in their mind. There is but one real evil in it (take my word, who know it well), and that is, that you have less the power of assisting others, who have not the same resources to support them. You have youth: you have many kind, well-intentioned people belonging to you; many acquaintances of your own, or families that will wish to serve you. Consider how many have had the same, or greater cause for dejection, with none of these resources before their eyes. Adieu! I sincerely wish your happiness.

P. S. I have just heard that a friend of mine is struck with a paralytic disorder, in which state it is likely he may live incapable of assisting himself, in the hands of servants or relations that only gape after his spoils, perhaps for years to come: think how many things may befall a man far worse than poverty or death.

LETTER XCVII.

From the same to the same.

Pembroke-College, June 24, 1769.

AND so you have a garden of your own, and you plant and transplant, and are dirty and amused? Are you not ashamed of yourself? Why, I have no such thing, you monster, nor ever shall be either dirty or amused as long as I live. My gardens are in the windows, like those of a lodger up three pair of stairs in Petticoat-lane, or Camomile-street, and they go to bed regularly under the same roof that I do. Dear, how charming it must be to walk out in one's own *garding*, and sit on a bench in the open air, with a fountain and leaden statue, and a rolling-stone, and an arbour: have a care of sore throats though, and the *agoe*.

However, be it known to you, though I have no garden, I have sold my estate*, and got a thousand guineas, and four-

* Consisting of houses on the west side of Hand-Alley, London. Mrs. Olliffe was the aunt here mentioned, who had a share in this estate, and for whom he procured this annuity. She died in 1771; a few months before her nephew.

* The death of his uncle, governor Floyer.

score pounds a year for my old aunt, and a twenty pound prize in the lottery, and Lord knows what arrears in the Treasury, and am a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him, and in a few days shall have new window-curtains: are you advised of that? Ay, and a new mattress to lie upon.

My Ode has been rehearsed again and again*, and the scholars have got scraps by heart: I expect to see it torn piecemeal in the North-Briton before it is born. If you will come you shall see it, and sing in it amidst a chorus from Salisbury and Gloucester music-meeting, great names there, and all well versed in Judas Maccabæus. I wish it were once over; for then I immediately go for a few days to London, and so with Mr. Brown to Aston, though I fear it will rain the whole summer, and Skiddaw will be invisible and inaccessible to mortals.

I have got *De la Lande's Voyage* through Italy, in eight volumes; he is a member of the Academy of Sciences, and pretty good to read. I have read too an octavo volume of *Shenstone's Letters*. Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions; and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned; but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it; his correspondence is about nothing else but this place and his own writings, with two or three neighbouring clergymen who wrote verses too.

I have just found the beginning of a letter, which somebody had dropped: I should rather call it first thoughts for the beginning of a letter; for there are many scratches and corrections. As I cannot use it myself (having got a beginning already of my own), I send it for your use on some great occasion.

“*Dear sir,*

“After so long silence, the hopes of pardon, and prospect of forgiveness, might seem entirely extinct, or at least very remote, was I not truly sensible of your goodness and candour, which is the only asylum that my negligence can fly

to, since every apology would prove insufficient to counterbalance it, or alleviate my fault: how then shall my deficiency presume to make so bold an attempt, or be able to suffer the hardships of so rough a campaign?” &c. &c. &c.

LETTER XCVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.

Nov. 19, 1769.

I RECEIVED your letter at Southampton; and as I would wish to treat every body according to their own rule and measure of good-breeding, have, against my inclination, waited till now before I answered it, purely out of fear and respect, and an ingenuous diffidence of my own abilities. If you will not take this as an excuse, accept it at least as a well-turned period, which is always my principal concern.

So I proceed to tell you that my health is much improved by the sea; not that I drank it or bathed in it, as the common people do: no! I only walked by it, and looked upon it. The climate is remarkably mild, even in October and November; no snow has been seen to lie there for these thirty years past; the myrtles grow in the ground against the houses, and Guernsey-lilies bloom in every window; the town, clean and well-built, surrounded by its old stone walls with their towers and gateways, stands at the point of a peninsula, and opens full south to an arm of the sea, which, having formed two beautiful bays on each hand of it, stretches away in direct view till it joins the British Channel; it is skirted on either side with gently-rising grounds, clothed with thick wood, and directly cross its mouth rise the high lands of the Isle of Wight at distance, but distinctly seen. In the bosom of the woods (concealed from profane eyes) lie hid the ruins of Nettley abbey; there may be richer and greater houses of religion, but the abbot is content with his situation. See there, at the top of that hanging meadow, under the shade of those old trees that bend into a half circle about it, he is walking slowly (good man!) and bidding his beads for the souls of his benefactors, interred in that venerable pile that lies beneath him. Beyond it (the meadow still descending) nods a

† Ode for Music on the Duke of Grafton's Installation.

thicket of oaks that mask the building, and have excluded a view too garish and luxuriant for a holy eye: only on either hand they leave an opening to the blue glittering sea. Did you not observe how, as that white sail shot by and was lost, he turned and crossed himself, to drive the tempter from him that had thrown that distraction in his way? I should tell you, that the ferryman who rowed me, a lusty young fellow, told me that he would not for all the world pass a night at the abbey (there were such things seen near it), though there was a power of money hid there. From thence I went to Salisbury, Wilton, and Stonehenge: but of these things I say no more, they will be published at the University press.

P. S. I must not close my letter without giving you one principal event of my history; which was, that (in the course of my late tour) I set out one morning before five o'clock, the moon shining through a dark and misty autumnal air, and got to the sea-coast time enough to be at the sun's levee. I saw the clouds and dark vapours open gradually to right and left, rolling over one another in great smoky wreathes, and the tide (as it flowed gently in upon the sands) first whitening, then slightly tinged with gold and blue; and all at once a little line of insufferable brightness that (before I can write these five words) was grown to half an orb, and now to a whole one, too glorious to be distinctly seen. It is very odd it makes no figure on paper; yet I shall remember it as long as the sun, or at least as long as I endure. I wonder whether any body ever saw it before. I hardly believe it.

LETTER XCIX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Beattie.

Pembroke Hall, July 2, 1770.

I REJOICE to hear that you are restored to better state of health, to your books, and to your Muse once again. That forced dissipation and exercise we are obliged to fly to as a remedy, when this frail machine goes wrong, is often almost as bad as the distemper we would cure; yet I too have been constrained of late to pursue a like regimen, on account of cer-

tain pains in the head (a sensation unknown to me before) and of great dejection of spirits. This, sir, is the only excuse I have to make you for my long silence, and not (as perhaps you may have figured to yourself) any secret reluctance I had to tell you my mind concerning the specimen you so kindly sent me of your new poem*: on the contrary, if I had seen any thing of importance to disapprove, I should have hastened to inform you, and never doubted of being forgiven. The truth is, I greatly like all I have seen, and wish to see more. The design is simple, and pregnant with poetical ideas of various kinds, yet seems somehow imperfect at the end. Why may not young Edwin, when necessity has driven him to take up the harp and assume the profession of a minstrel, do some great and singular service to his country? (what service I must leave to your invention) such as no general, no statesman, no moralist, could do without the aid of music, inspiration, and poetry. This will not appear an improbability in those early times, and in a character then held sacred, and respected by all nations: besides, it will be a full answer to all the hermit has said, when he dissuaded him from cultivating these pleasing arts; it will shew their use, and make the best panegyric of our favourite and celestial science. And lastly (what weighs most with me), it will throw more of action, pathos, and interest, into your design, which already abounds in reflection and sentiment. As to description, I have always thought that it made the most graceful ornament of poetry, but never ought to make the subject. Your ideas are new, and borrowed from a mountainous country, the only one that can furnish truly picturesque scenery. Some trifles in the language or versification you will permit me to remark. * * *

I will not enter at present into the merits of your *Essay on Truth*, because I have not yet given it all the attention it deserves, though I have read it through with pleasure; besides, I am partial; for I have always thought David Hume a pernicious writer, and believe he has done as much mischief here as he has in his own country. A turbid and shallow stream often appears to our apprehen-

* The Minstrel.

sions very deep. A professed sceptic can be guided by nothing but his present passions (if he has any) and interests; and to be masters of his philosophy we need not his books or advice; for every child is capable of the same thing, without any study at all. Is not that *naïveté* and good humour, which his admirers celebrate in him, owing to this, that he has continued all his days an infant, but one that unhappily has been taught to read and write? That childish nation, the French, have given him vogue and fashion, and we, as usual, have learned from them to admire him at second hand.

LETTER C.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.

It is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness; and the same letter informed me that she was recovered, otherwise I had then wrote to you only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday, and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart*. Many a corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use (not for my own), but I will leave you the merit of doing it for yourself. Pray tell me how your health is: I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself as a guide to Mr. Palgrave into the Sierra Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent, not disagreeably. In the west part of it, from every eminence the eye catches some long reach of the Thames and Medway, with all their shipping: in

* He seldom mentioned his mother without a sigh. After his death her gowns and wearing apparel were found in a trunk in his apartments just as she had left them: it seemed as if he could never take the resolution to open it, in order to distribute them to his female relations, to whom, by his will, he bequeathed them.

the east the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This sentence is so fine, I am quite ashamed; but no matter; you must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his pudden sleeve. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable, that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by any thing but men, and women, and clergy, and such two-legged cattle. Now I am here again very disconsolate, and all alone, for Mr. Brown is gone, and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me: you, I hope, are better off, riding and walking in the woods of Studley, &c. &c. I must not wish for you here; besides I am going to town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement.

LETTER CI.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

May 24, 1771.

My last summer's tour was through Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire, five of the most beautiful counties in the kingdom. The very principal light and capital feature of my journey was the river Wye, which I descended in a boat for near forty miles from Ross to Chepstow. Its banks are a succession of nameless beauties; one out of many you may see not ill described by Mr. Whately, in his *Observations on Gardening*, under the name of the New-Weir: he has also touched upon two others, Tintern Abbey and Persfield, both of them famous scenes, and both on the Wye. Monmouth, a town I never heard mentioned, lies on the same river, in a vale that is the delight of my eyes, and the very seat of pleasure. The vale of Abergavenny, Ragland and Chepstow castles; Ludlow, Malvern-Hills, Hampton-Court, near Lemster; the Leasowes, Hagley, the three cities and their cathedrals; and lastly Oxford (where I passed two days on my return with great satisfaction), were the rest of my acquisitions; and no bad harvest in my opinion: but I made no journal myself, else you should have

had it : I have indeed a short one written by the companion of my travels*, that serves to recal and fix the fleeting images of these things.

I have had a cough upon me these three months, which is incurable. The approaching summer I have sometimes had thoughts of spending on the con-

* Mr. Nicholls.

tinient ; but I have now dropped that intention, and believe my expeditions will terminate in Old Park ; but I make no promise, and can answer for nothing ; my own employment so sticks in my stomach, and troubles my conscience : and yet travel I must, or cease to exist. Till this year I hardly knew what (mechanical) low spirits were, but now I even tremble at an east wind.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION II.

FROM THE LETTERS OF LAURENCE STERNE, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

Mr. Sterne to Miss L.—

I HAVE offended her whom I so tenderly love!—what could tempt me to it! but, if a beggar was to knock at thy gate, wouldst thou not open the door, and be melted with compassion?—I know thou wouldst, for Pity has erected a temple in thy bosom.—Sweetest, and best of all human passions! let thy web of tenderness cover the pensive form of Affliction, and soften the darkest shades of Misery! I have re-considered this apology, and, alas! what will it accomplish? Arguments, however finely spun, can never change the nature of things—very true—so a truce with them.

I have lost a very valuable friend by a sad accident; and what is worse, he has left a widow and five young children to lament this sudden stroke.—If real usefulness and integrity of heart could have secured him from this, his friends would not now be mourning his untimely fate.—These dark and seemingly cruel dispensations of Providence often make the best of human hearts complain.—Who can paint the distress of an affectionate mother, made a widow in a moment, weeping in bitterness over a numerous, helpless, and fatherless offspring!—God! these are thy chastisements, and require (hard task!) a pious acquiescence.

Forgive me this digression, and allow me to drop a tear over a departed friend; and, what is more excellent, an honest man. My L.! thou wilt feel all that

kindness can inspire in the death of——. The event was sudden, and thy gentle spirit would be more alarmed on that account.—But, my L., thou hast less to lament, as old age was creeping on, and her period of doing good, and being useful, was nearly over.—At sixty years of age the tenement gets fast out of repair, and the lodger with anxiety thinks of a discharge.—In such a situation the poet might well say,

“The soul uneasy,” &c.

My L. talks of leaving the country—may a kind angel guide thy steps hither!—Solitude at length grows tiresome.—Thou sayest thou wilt quit the place with regret—I think so too.—Does not something uneasy mingle with the very reflection of leaving it? It is like parting with an old friend, whose temper and company one has long been acquainted with—I think I see you looking twenty times a day at the house—almost counting every brick and pane of glass, and telling them at the same time with a sigh, you are going to leave them.—Oh happy modification of matter! they will remain insensible of thy loss.—But how wilt thou be able to part with thy garden?—The recollection of so many pleasing walks must have endeared it to you. The trees, the shrubs, the flowers, which thou hast reared with thy own hands—will they not droop and fade away sooner upon thy departure?—Who will be the successor to nurse them in thy absence?—Thou wilt leave thy name upon the myrtle-tree.—If trees, and shrubs, and flowers, could compose an elegy, I

should expect a very plaintive one upon this subject.

Adieu, adieu! Believe me ever, ever thine.

LETTER II.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. F——.

York, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 1759.

Dear madam,

YOUR kind inquiries after my health deserve my best thanks.—What can give one more pleasure than the good wishes of those we value?—I am sorry you give so bad an account of your own health, but hope you will find benefit from tar-water—it has been of infinite service to me.—I suppose my good lady, by what you say in your letter, “that I am busy writing an extraordinary book,” that your intelligence comes from York—the fountain-head of all chit-chat news—and—no matter.—Now for your desire of knowing the reason of my turning author? why truly I am tired of employing my brains for other people’s advantage.—’Tis a foolish sacrifice I have made for some years to an ungrateful person.—I depend much upon the candour of the public, but I shall not pick out a jury to try the merit of my book amongst —, and—till you read my *Tristram*, do not, like some people, condemn it.—Laugh I am sure you will at some passages.—I have hired a small house in the Minster Yard for my wife and daughter—the latter is to begin dancing, &c.: if I cannot leave her a fortune, I will at least give her an education.—As I shall publish my works very soon, I shall be in town by March, and shall have the pleasure of meeting with you.—All your friends are well, and ever hold you in the same estimation that your sincere friend does.

Adieu, dear lady; believe me, with every wish for your happiness, your most faithful, &c.

LETTER III.

Mr. Sterne to J— H— S—, Esq.

Coxwold, July 28, 1761.

Dear H——,

I SYMPATHIZED for, or with you, on the detail you gave me of your late agitations—and would willingly have taken my horse, and trotted to the oracle to have inquired into the etymology of all your sufferings, had I not been assured that

all that evacuation of bilious matter, with all that abdominal motion attending it (both which are equal to a month’s purgation and exercise), will have left you better than it found you.—Need one go to D——, to be told that all kind of mild (mark, I am going to talk more foolishly than your apothecary), opening, saponaceous, dirty-shirt, sud-washing liquors are proper for you, and consequently all stypical potations death and destruction?—if you had not shut up your gall-ducts by these, the glauber salts could not have hurt—as it was, ’twas like a match to the gunpowder, by raising a fresh combustion, as all physic does at first, so that you have been left off—nitre, brimstone, and charcoal (which is blackness itself), all at one blast—’twas well the piece did not burst, for I think it underwent great violence; and, as it is proof, will, I hope, do much service in this militating world.—Panty* is mistaken, I quarrel with no one.—There was the coxcomb of ——— in the house, who lost temper with me for no reason upon earth but that I could not fall down and worship a brazen image of learning and eloquence, which he set up, to the persecution of all true believers—I sat down upon *his altar*, and whistled in the time of his divine service—and broke down his carved work, and kicked his incense-pot to the d——; so he retreated, *sed non sine felle in corde suo*.—I have wrote a clerum, whether I shall take my doctor’s degrees or no—I am much in doubt, but I trow not.—I go on with *Tristram*—I have bought seven hundred books at a purchase dog-cheap—and many good—and I have been a week getting them set up in my best room here—why do not you transport yours to town? but I talk like a fool.—This will just catch you at your spaw—I wish you *incolumem apud Londinum*—do you go there for good and all—or ill?—I am, dear cousin, yours affectionately.

LETTER IV.

From the same to the same.

Coxwold [about August], 1761.

Dear H——,

I REJOICE you are in London—rest you there in peace; here ’tis the devil.—You was a good prophet.—I wish myself back

* The reverend Mr. R—— L——.

again, as you told me I should—but not because a thin, death-doing, pestiferous, north-east wind blows in a line directly from Crazy-castle turret full upon me in this cuckoldy retreat (for I value the north-east wind and all its powers not a straw),—but the transition from rapid motion to absolute rest was too violent.—I should have walked about the streets of York ten days, as a proper medium to have passed through, before I entered upon my rest.—I staid but a moment, and I have been here but a few, to satisfy me I have not managed my miseries like a wise man—and if God, for my consolation under them, had not poured forth the spirit of Shandeism into me, which will not suffer me to think two moments upon any grave subject, I would else just now lie down and die—die—and yet, in half an hour's time, I'll lay a guinea I shall be as merry as a monkey—and as mischievous too, and forget it all—so that this is but a copy of the present train running across my brain.—And so you think this cursed stupid—but that, my dear H. depends much upon the *quotâ horâ* of your shabby clock, if the pointer of it is in any quarter between ten in the morning or four in the afternoon—I give it up—or if the day is obscured by dark engendering clouds of either wet or dry weather, I am still lost—but who knows but it may be five—and the day as fine a day as ever shone upon the earth since the destruction of Sodom—and peradventure your honour may have got a good hearty dinner to-day, and eat and drank your intellectuals into a placidulish and a blandulish amalgama—to bear nonsense.—So much for that.

'Tis as cold and churlish just now, as (if God had not pleased it to be so) it ought to have been in bleak December, and therefore I am glad you are where you are, and where (I repeat it again) I wish I was also.—Curse of poverty, and absence from those we love!—they are two great evils, which embitter all things—and yet with the first I am not haunted much.—As to matrimony, I should be a beast to rail at it, for my wife is easy—but the world is not—and had I staid from her a second longer it would have been a burning shame—else she declares herself happier without me—but not in anger is this declaration made—but in pure sober good sense,

built on sound experience—she hopes you will be able to strike a bargain for me before this time twelvemonth, to lead a bear round Europe: and from this hope from you, I verily believe it is, that you are so high in her favour at present—she swears you are a fellow of wit, though humorous; a funny, jolly soul, though somewhat splenetic; and (bating the love of women) as honest as gold—how do you like the simile?—Oh, Lord! now you are going to Ranelagh to-night, and I am sitting, sorrowful as the prophet was when the voice cried out to him and said, “What dost thou here, Elijah?”—’Tis well the spirit does not make the same at Coxwoud—for unless for the few sheep left me to take care of, in this wilderness, I might as well, nay better, be at Mecca.—When we find we can, by a shifting of places, run away from ourselves, what think you of a jaunt there, before we finally pay a visit to the *vale of Jehoshaphat*?—As ill a fame as we have I trust I shall one day or other see you face to face—so tell the two colonels, if they love good company, to live righteously and soberly as *you do*, and then they will have no doubts or dangers within or without them—Present my best and warmest wishes to them, and advise the eldest to prop up his spirits, and get a rich dowager before the conclusion of the peace—Why will not the advice suit both, *par nobile fratrum*?

To-morrow morning (if Heaven permit) I begin the fifth volume of *Shandy*—I care not a curse for the critics—I'll load my vehicle with what goods he sends me, and they may take 'em off my hands, or let them alone—I am very valorous—and 'tis in proportion as we retire from the world, and see it in its true dimensions, that we despise it—no bad rant!—God above bless you! You know I am your affectionate cousin.

What few remain of the Demoniacs, greet—and write me a letter, if you are able, as foolish as this.

LETTER V.

Mr. Sterne to Lady D—.

Coxwoud, Sept. 21, 1761.

I RETURN to my new habitation, fully determined to write as hard as can be, and thank you most cordially, my dear

lady, for your letter of congratulation upon my lord Fauconberg's having presented me with the curacy of this place — though your congratulation comes somewhat of the latest, as I have been possessed of it some time. — I hope I have been of some service to his lordship, and he has sufficiently requited me. — 'Tis seventy guineas a year in my pocket, though worth a hundred — but it obliges me to have a curate to officiate at Sutton and Stillington. — 'Tis within a mile of his lordship's seat and park. 'Tis a very agreeable ride out in the chaise I purchased for my wife. — Lyd* has a poney which she delights in. Whilst they take these diversions, I am scribbling away at my Tristram. — These two volumes are, I think, the best — I shall write as long as I live; 'tis in fact my hobby-horse: and so much am I delighted with my uncle Toby's imaginary character, that I am become an enthusiast. — My Lydia helps to copy for me — and my wife knits, and listens as I read her chapters. — The coronation of his majesty (whom God preserve!) has cost me the value of an ox, which is to be roasted whole in the middle of the town, and my parishioners will, I suppose, be very merry upon the occasion. — You will then be in town — and feast your eyes with a sight, which 'tis to be hoped will not be in either of our powers to see again — for in point of age we have about twenty years the start of his majesty. — And now, my dear friend, I must finish this — and with every wish for your happiness, conclude myself your most sincere well-wisher and friend.

LETTER VI.

Mr. Sterne to David Garrick, Esq.

Paris, Jan. 31, 1762.

My dear friend,
THINK not, because I have been a fortnight in this metropolis without writing to you, that therefore I have not had you and Mrs. Garrick a hundred times in my head and heart — heart! yes, yes, say you — but I must not waste paper in *badinage* this post, whatever I do the next. Well! here I am, my friend, as much improved in my health, for the time, as ever your friendship could wish,

* His daughter.

or at least your faith give credit to — by the bye I am somewhat worse in my intellectuals, for my head is turned round with what I see, and the unexpected honours I have met with here. Tristram was almost as much known here as in London, at least among your men of condition and learning, and has got me introduced into so many circles ('tis *comme à Londres*). I have just now a fortnight's dinners and suppers upon my hands. — My application to the count de Choiseul goes on swimmingly, for not only Mr. Pelletiere (who, by the bye, sends ten thousand civilities to you and Mrs. Garrick) has undertaken my affair, but the count de Limbrough — the baron d'Holbach has offered any security for the inoffensiveness of my behaviour in France — 'tis more, you rogue, than you will do. — This baron is one of the most learned noblemen here, the great protector of wits, and the *Scavans* who are no wits — keeps open house three days a week — his house is now, as yours was to me, my own — he lives at great expense. — 'Twas an odd incident when I was introduced to the count de Bissie, which I was at his desire — I found him reading Tristram. This grandee does me great honours, and gives me leave to go a private way through his apartments into the Palais Royal, to view the duke of Orleans' collections, every day I have time. I have been at the doctors of Sorbonne — I hope in a fortnight to break through, or rather from, the delights of this place, which, in the *savoir-vivre*, exceed all the places, I believe, in this section of the globe —

I am going, when this letter is wrote, with Mr. Fox and Mr. Maccartney to Versailles — the next morning I wait upon Mons. Titon, in company with Mr. Maccartney, who is known to him, to deliver your commands. I have bought you the pamphlet, upon theatrical, or rather tragical declamation. I have bought another in verse, worth reading, and you will receive them, with what I can pick up this week, by a servant of Mr. Hodges, whom he is sending back to England.

I was last night with Mr. Fox to see Mademoiselle Claron, in *Iphigene* — she is extremely great — would to God you had one or two like her — what a luxury, to see you with one of such powers in the same interesting scene — but 'tis too much

—Ah! Preville! thou art Mercury himself.—By virtue of taking a couple of boxes, we have bespoke this week *The Frenchman in London*, in which Preville is to send us home to supper all happy—I mean about fifteen or sixteen English of distinction, who are now here, and live well with each other.

I am under great obligations to Mr. Pitt, who has behaved in every respect to me like a man of good-breeding and good-nature—in a post or two, I will write again—Foley is an honest soul—I could write six volumes of what has passed comically in this great scene, since these last fourteen days—but more of this hereafter.—We are all going into mourning; nor you, nor Mrs. Garriek, would know me, if you met me in my *remise*—bless you both! Service to Mrs. Denis. Adieu, adieu!

LETTER VII.

Mr. Sterne to Lady D——.

London*, Feb. 1, 1762.

YOUR ladyship's kind inquiries after my health are indeed kind and of a piece with the rest of your character. Indeed I am very ill, having broke a vessel in my lungs—hard writing in the summer, together with preaching, which I have not strength for, is ever fatal to me—but I cannot avoid the latter yet, and the former is too pleasurable to be given up—I believe I shall try if the south of France will not be of service to me—his G. of Y. has most humanely given me the permission for a year or two—I shall set off with great hopes of its efficacy, and shall write to my wife and daughter to come and join me at Paris, else my stay could not be so long.—“*Le Fevre's* story has beguiled your ladyship of your tears,” and the thought of the accusing spirit flying up to heaven's chancery with the oath you are kind enough to say is sublime—my friend Mr. Garriek thinks so too, and I am most vain of his approbation—your ladyship's opinion adds not a little to my vanity.

I wish I had time to take a little excursion to Bath, were it only to thank you for all the obliging things you say in your letter—but 'tis impossible—accept at least my warmest thanks—If I could

* This letter, though dated from London, was evidently written at Paris.

tempt my friend Mr. H. to come to France, I should be truly happy—If I can be of any service to you at Paris, command him who is, and ever will be, your ladyship's faithful, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. Sterne, York.

Paris, May 17, 1762.

My dear,

It is a thousand to one that this reaches you before you have set out—however, I take the chance—you will receive one wrote last night, the moment you get to Mr. E. and to wish you joy of your arrival in town—to that letter, which you will find in town, I have nothing to add that I can think on—for I have almost drain'd my brains dry upon the subject.—For God's sake rise early and gallop away in the cool—and always see that you have not forgot your baggage in changing post chaises.—You will find good tea upon the road from York to Dover—only bring a little to carry you from Calais to Paris—give the Custom-house officers what I told you—at Calais give more, if you have much Scotch snuff—but as tobacco is good here, you had best bring a Scotch mill and make it yourself, that is, order your valet to manufacture it—'twill keep him out of mischief.—I would advise you to take three days in coming up, for fear of heating yourselves—See that they do not give you a bad vehicle, when a better is in the yard: but you will look sharp—drink small Rhenish to keep you cool (that is if you like it.) Live well, and deny yourselves nothing your hearts wish. So God in heaven prosper and go along with you—kiss my Lydia, and believe me both affectionately yours.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

Paris, May 31, 1762.

My dear,

THERE have no mails arrived here till this morning, for three posts; so I expected with great impatience a letter from you and Lydia—and lo! it is arrived. You are as busy as Throp's wife, and by the time you receive this, you will be busier still. I have exhausted all my ideas about your journey—and what

is needful for you to do before and during it—so I write only to tell you I am well—Mr. Colebrooks, the minister of Switzerland's secretary, I got this morning to write a letter for you to the governor of the Custom-house office at Calais—it shall be sent you next post. You must be cautious about Scotch snuff—take half a pound in your pocket, and make Lyd do the same. 'Tis well I bought you a chaise—there is no getting one in Paris now, but at an enormous price—for they are all sent to the army, and such a one as yours we have not been able to match for forty guineas, for a friend of mine who is going from hence to Italy—the weather was never known to set in so hot, as it has done the latter end of this month, so he and his party are to get into his chaises by four in the morning, and travel till nine—and not stir out again till six;—but I hope this severe heat will abate by the time you come here—however, I beg of you once more to take special care of heating your blood in travelling, and come *tout doucement*, when you find the heat too much—I shall look impatiently for intelligence from you, and hope to hear all goes well; that you conquer all difficulties, that you have received your passport, my picture, &c. Write and tell me something of every thing. I long to see you both, you may be assured, my dear wife and child, after so long a separation—and write me a line directly, that I may have all the notice you can give me, that I may have apartments ready and fit for you when you arrive.—For my own part I shall continue writing to you a fortnight longer—present my respects to all friends—you have bid Mr. C. get my visitations at P. done for me, &c. &c. If any offers are made about the inclosure at Rascal, they must be inclosed to me—nothing that is fairly proposed shall stand still on my score. Do all for the best, as He who guides all things will I hope do for us—so Heaven preserve you both—believe me your affectionate, &c.

Love to my Lydia—I have bought her a gold watch to present to her when she comes.

LETTER X.

Mr. Sterne to Lady D—.

Paris, July 9, 1762.

I WILL not send your ladyship the trifles you bid me purchase without a line. I am very well pleased with Paris—indeed I meet with so many civilities amongst the people here, that I must sing their praises—the French have a great deal of urbanity in their composition, and to stay a little time amongst them will be agreeable.—I splutter French so as to be understood—but I have had a droll adventure here, in which my Latin was of some service to me—I had hired a chaise and a horse to go about seven miles into the country, but, Shandean like, did not take notice that the horse was almost dead when I took him.—Before I got half-way, the poor animal dropped down dead—so I was forced to appear before the police, and began to tell my story in French, which was, that the poor beast had to do with a worse beast than himself, namely, his master, who had driven him all the day before (Jehu like), and that it had neither had corn, nor hay, therefore I was not to pay for the horse—but I might as well have whistled as have spoke French, and I believe my Latin was equal to my uncle Toby's *Lilabulero*—being not understood because of its purity; but by dint of words I forced my judge to do me justice—no common thing, by the way, in France.—My wife and daughter are arrived—the latter does nothing but look out of the window, and complain of the torment of being frizzled.—I wish she may ever remain a child of nature—I hate children of art.

I hope this will find your ladyship well—and that you will be kind enough to direct to me at Toulouse, which place I shall set out for very soon. I am, with truth and sincerity, your ladyship's most faithful, &c.

LETTER XI.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. E.

Paris, July 12, 1762.

Dear sir,
My wife and daughter arrived here safe and sound on Thursday, and are in high raptures with the speed and pleasantness of their journey, and particularly of all they see and meet with here.

But in their journey from York to Paris nothing has given them a more sensible and lasting pleasure than the marks of kindness they received from you and Mrs. E. The friendship, good-will, and politeness of my two friends I never doubted to me, or mine, and I return you both all a grateful man is capable of, which is merely my thanks. I have taken, however, the liberty of sending an Indian taffety, which Mrs. E. must do me the honour to wear for my wife's sake, who would have got it made up, but that Mr. Stanhope, the consul of Algiers, who sets off to-morrow morning for London, has been so kind (I mean his lady) as to take charge of it; and we had but just time to procure it: and had we missed that opportunity, as we should have been obliged to have left it behind us at Paris, we knew not when or how to get it to our friend—I wish it had been better worth a paragraph. If there is any thing we can buy or procure for you here (intelligence included), you have a right to command me—for I am yours, with my wife and girl's kind love to you and Mrs. E.

LETTER XII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse, August 14, 1762.

My dear Foley,
AFTER many turnings (*alias digressions*), to say nothing of downright overthrows, stops, and delays, we have arrived in three weeks at Toulouse, and are now settled in our houses with servants, &c. about us, and look as composed as if we had been here seven years. In our journey we suffered so much from the heats, it gives me pain to remember it. I never saw a cloud from Paris to Nismes, half as broad as a twenty-four sols piece. Good God! we were toasted, roasted, grill'd, stew'd, and carbonaded on one side or other all the way—and being all done enough (*assez cuits*) in the day, we were eat up at night by bugs, and other unswept-out vermin, the legal inhabitants (if length of possession gives right) of every inn we lay at—Can you conceive a worse accident than that in such a journey, in the hottest day and hour of it, four miles from either tree or shrub, which could

cast a shade of the size of one of Eve's fig-leaves—that we should break a hind wheel in ten thousand pieces, and be obliged in consequence to sit five hours on a gravelly road, without one drop of water, or possibility of getting any?—To mend the matter, my two postillions were two dough-hearted fools, and fell a crying—Nothing was to be done! By Heaven, quoth I, pulling off my coat and waistcoat, something shall be done, for I'll thrash you both within an inch of your lives—and then make you take each of you a horse, and ride like two devils to the next post, for a cart to carry my baggage, and a wheel to carry ourselves—Our luggage weighed ten quintals—'twas the fair of Baucaire—all the world was going or returning—we were asked by every soul who passed by us, if we were going to the fair of Baucaire—No wonder, quoth I, we have goods enough! *Vous avez raison, mes amis.*

Well! here we are after all, my dear friend—and most deliciously placed at the extremity of the town, in an excellent house well furnished, and elegant beyond any thing. I looked for—'tis built in the form of a hotel, with a pretty court towards the town—and behind, the best garden in Toulouse, laid out in serpentine walks, and so large that the company in our quarter usually come to walk there in the evenings, for which they have my consent—"the more the merrier."—The house consists of a good *salle à manger* above-stairs, joining to the very great *salle à compagnie* as large as the baron d'Holbach's; three handsome bed-chambers with dressing-rooms to them—below-stairs two very good rooms for myself, one to study in, the other to see company.—I have moreover cellars round the court, and all other offices.—Of the same landlord I have bargained to have the use of a country-house which he has two miles out of town; so that myself and all my family have nothing more to do than to take our hats and remove from the one to the other.—My landlord is moreover to keep the gardens in order—and what do you think I am to pay for all this? neither more nor less than thirty pounds a year—all things are cheap in proportion—so we shall live for very very little.—I dined yesterday with Mr. H——; he is most pleasantly situated, and they all are well.—As for the books you have received for D——, the

bookseller was a fool not to send the bill along with them. I will write to him about it.—I wish you was with me for two months; it would cure you of all evils ghostly and bodily—but this, like many other wishes both for you and myself, must have its completion elsewhere—Adieu, my kind friend, and believe that I love you as much from inclination as reason, for I am most truly yours.

My wife and girl join in compliments to you—My best respects to my worthy baron d'Holbach and all that society—remember me to my friend Mr. Panchaud.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. Sterne to J— H— S—, Esq.

Toulouse, Oct. 19, 1762.

My dear H.

I RECEIVED your letter yesterday—so it has been travelling from Crazy Castle to Toulouse full eighteen days—If I had nothing to stop me, I would engage to set out this morning, and knock at Crazy-Castle gates in three days less time—by which time I should find you and the colonel, Panty, &c. all alone—the season I most like and wish to be with you—I rejoice from my heart, down to my reins, that you have snatched so many happy and sunshiny days out of the hands of the blue devils—If we live to meet and join our forces as heretofore, we will give these gentry a drubbing—and turn them for ever out of their usurped citadel—some legions of them have been put to flight already by your operations this last campaign—and I hope to have a hand in dispersing the remainder the first time my dear cousin sets up his banners again under the square tower—But what art thou meditating with axes and hammers?—"I know the pride and the naughtiness of thy heart," and thou lovest the sweet visions of architraves, friezes, and pediments with their tympanums, and thou hast found out a pretence, *à raison de cinq cent livres sterling* to be laid out in four years, &c. &c. (so as not to be felt, which is always added by the d—l as a bait) to justify thyself unto thyself—It may be very wise to do this—but it is wiser to keep one's money in one's pocket, whilst there are wars without and rumours of wars with-

in. St.—advises his disciples to sell both coat and waistcoat—and go rather without shirt or sword, than leave no money in their scrip to go to Jerusalem with—Now those *quatre ans consecutifs*, my dear Anthony, are the most precious morsels of thy life to come (in this world), and thou wilt do well to enjoy that morsel without cares, calculations, and curses, and damns, and debts—for as sure as stone is stone, and mortar is mortar, &c. it will be one of the many works of thy repentance—But after all, if the fates have decreed it, as you and I have some time supposed it on account of your generosity, "that you are never to be a monied man," the decree will be fulfilled, whether you adorn your castle and line it with cedar, and paint it within side and without side with vermilion, or not—*et cela étant* (having a bottle of Frontinac and glass at my right hand) I drink, dear Anthony, to thy health and happiness, and to the final accomplishments of all thy lunar and sub-lunar projects.—For six weeks together, after I wrote my last letter to you, my projects were many stories higher, for I was all that time, as I thought, journeying on to the other world—I fell ill of an epidemic vile fever which killed hundreds about me—The physicians here are the arrantest charlatans in Europe, or the most ignorant of all pretending fools—I withdrew what was left of me out of their hands, and recommended my affairs entirely to Dame Nature—She (dear goddess) has saved me in fifty different pinching bouts, and I begin to have a kind of enthusiasm now in her-favour, and in my own, that one or two more escapes will make me believe I shall leave you all at last by translation, and not by fair death. I am now as stout and foolish again as a happy man can wish to be—and am busy playing the fool with my uncle Toby, whom I have got soused over head and ears in love.—I have many hints and projects for other works; all will go on I trust as I wish in this matter.—When I have reaped the benefit of this winter at Toulouse—I cannot see I have any thing more to do with it; therefore, after having gone with my wife and girl to Bagnieres, I shall return from whence I came—Now my wife wants to stay another year to save money; and this opposition of wishes, though it will not be as sour

as lemon, yet it will not be as sweet as sugarcandy.—I wish T— would lead sir Charles to Toulouse; 'tis as good as any town in the south of France—for my own part, 'tis not to my taste—but I believe the ground-work of my *ennui* is more to the eternal platitude of the French character—little variety, no originality in it at all—than to any other cause—for they are very civil—but civility itself, in that uniform, wearies and bidders one to death.—If I do not mind, I shall grow most stupid and sententious—Miss Shandy is hard at it with music, dancing, and French-speaking, in the last of which she does *à merveille*, and speaks it with an excellent accent, considering she practises within sight of the Pyrenean mountains.—If the snows will suffer me, I propose to spend two or three months at Barege, or Bagnieres, but my dear wife is against all schemes of additional expenses—which wicked propensity (though not of despotic power) yet I cannot suffer—though by the bye laudable enough—But she may talk—I will do my own way, and she will acquiesce without a word of debate on the subject.—Who can say so much in praise of his wife? Few I trow.—M—— is out of town vintaging—so write to me, *Monsieur Sterne, gentil-homme Anglois*—it will find me.—We are as much out of the road of all intelligence here as at the Cape of Good Hope—so write a long nonsensical letter like this, now and then, to me—in which say nothing but what may be shewn (though I love every paragraph and spirited stroke of your pen, others might not), for you must know, a letter no sooner arrives from England, but Curiosity is upon her knees to know the contents.—Adieu, dear H. believe me your affectionate, &c.

We have had bitter cold weather here these fourteen days—which has obliged us to sit with whole pagells of wood lighted up to our noses—it is a dear article—but every thing else being extremely cheap, Madame keeps an excellent good house, with *soupe, bouilli, roti*—&c. &c. for two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

LETTER XIV.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse, Nov. 9, 1762.

My dear Foley,
I HAVE had this week your letter on my table, and hope you will forgive my not answering it sooner—and even to-day I can but write you ten lines, being engaged at Mrs. M——'s. I would not omit one post more acknowledging the favour.—In a few posts I will write you a long one gratis, that is for love.—Thank you for having done what I desired you—and for the future direct to me under cover at Monsieur Brousse's—I receive all letters through him, more punctual and sooner than when left at the post-house.

H——'s family greet you with mine—we are much together, and never forget you—forget me not to the baron—and all the circle—nor to your domestic circle.

I am got pretty well, and sport much with my uncle Toby in the volume I am now fabricating for the laughing part of the world—for the melancholy part of it, I have nothing but my prayers—so God help them.—I shall hear from you in a post or two at least after you receive this—in the mean time, dear Foley, adieu, and believe no man wishes or esteems you more than your, &c.

LETTER XV.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse, Wednesday,
Dec. 3, 1762.

Dear Foley,
I HAVE for the last fortnight every post-day gone to Messrs. B—— and sons, in expectation of the pleasure of a letter from you with the remittance I desired you to send me here.—When a man has no more than half a dozen guineas in his pocket—and a thousand miles from home—and in a country where he can as soon raise the d—l as a six-livre piece to go to market with, in case he has changed his last guinea—you will not envy my situation—God bless you—remit me the balance due upon the receipt of this.—We are all at H——'s, practising a play we are to act here this Christmas holidays

—all the *Dramatis Personæ* are of the English, of which we have a happy society living together like brothers and sisters—Your banker here has just sent me word the tea Mr. H. wrote for is to be delivered into my hands—'tis all one into whose hands the treasure falls—we shall pay Brousse for it the day we get it—we join in our most friendly respects, and believe me, dear Foley, truly yours.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse, Dec. 17, 1762.

My dear Foley,
THE post after I wrote last, I received yours with the inclosed draught upon the receiver, for which I return you all thanks—I have received this day likewise the box and tea all safe and sound—so we shall all of us be in our cups this Christmas, and drink without fear or stint.—We begin to live extremely happy, and are all together every night—fiddling, laughing, and singing, and cracking jokes. You will scarce believe the news I tell you—there are a company of English strollers arrived here, who are to act comedies all the Christmas, and are now busy in making dresses and preparing some of our best comedies—Your wonder will cease, when I inform you these strollers are your friends, with the rest of our society, to whom I proposed this scheme *soulagement*—and I assure you we do well.—The next week, with a grand orchestra, we play the *Busy Body*—and The Journey to London the week after; but I have some thoughts of adapting it to your situation—and making it The Journey to Toulouse, which with the change of half a dozen scenes, may be easily done.—Thus, my dear F. for want of something better we have recourse to ourselves, and strike out the best amusements we can from such materials.—My kind love and friendship to all my true friends—My service to the rest. H—'s family have just left me, having been this last week with us—they will be with me all the holidays. In summer we shall visit them, and so balance hospitalities. Adieu, yours most truly.

LETTER XVII.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse, March 29, 1763.

Dear Foley,
—THOUGH that's a mistake! I mean the date of the place, for I write at Mr. H—'s in the country, and have been there with my people all the week—"How does Tristram do?" you say in yours to him—'Faith, but so so—the worst of human maladies is poverty—though that is a second lie—for poverty of spirit is worse than poverty of purse by ten thousand *per cent.*—I inclose you a remedy for the one, a draught of a hundred-and-thirty pounds, for which I insist upon a rescription by the very return—or I will send you and all your commissaries to the d—l.—I do not hear they have tasted of one fleshy banquet all this Lent—you will make an excellent *grillé*. P—they can make nothing of him, but *bouillon*—I mean my other two friends no ill—so shall send them a reprieve, as they acted out of necessity—not choice.—My kind respects to baron d'Holbach, and all his household—say all that is kind for me to my other friends—you know how much, dear Foley, I am yours.

I have not five louis to vapour with in this land of coxcombs—My wife's compliments.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse, April 13, 1763.

Dear Foley,
I THANK you for your punctuality in sending me the rescription, and for your box by the courier, which came safe by last post.—I was not surprised much with your account of lord * * * * * being obliged to give way—and for the rest, all follows in course.—I suppose you will endeavour to fish and catch something for yourself in these troubled waters—at least I wish you all a reasonable man can wish for himself—which is wishing enough for you—all the rest is in the brain—Mr. Woodhouse (whom you know) is also here—he is a most amiable worthy man, and I have the pleasure of having him much with me—in a short time he proceeds to Italy.—The first week in

June, I decamp like a patriarch with my whole household, to pitch our tents for three months at the foot of the Pyrenean hills at Bagnieres, where I expect much health and much amusement from the concourse of adventurers from all corners of the earth.—Mrs. M—— sets out, at the same time, for another part of the Pyrenean hills, at Courtray—fromwhence to Italy—this is the general plan of operation here—except that I have some thoughts of spending the winter at Florence, and crossing over with my family to Leghorn by water—and in April of returning by way of Paris home—but this is a sketch only, for in all things I am governed by circumstances—so that what is fit to be done on Monday, may be very unwise on Saturday—On all days of the week believe me yours, with unfeigned truth.

P. S. All compliments to my Parisian friends.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse, May 21, 1763.

I took the liberty, three weeks ago, to desire you would be so kind as to send me fourscore pounds, having received a letter the same post from my agent, that he would order the money to be paid to your correspondent in London in a fortnight.—It is some disappointment to me that you have taken no notice of my letter, especially as I told you we waited for the money before we set out for Bagnieres—and so little distrust had I that such a civility would be refused me, that we have actually had all our things packed up these eight days, in hourly expectation of receiving a letter.—Perhaps my good friend has waited till he heard the money was paid in London.—But you might have trusted to my honour—that all the cash in your iron box (and all the bankers in Europe put together) could not have tempted me to say the thing that is not.—I hope before this you will have received an account of the money being paid in London.—But it would have been taken kindly, if you had wrote me word you would transmit me the money when you had received it, but no sooner; for Mr. R— of Montpelier,

though I know him not, yet knows enough of me to have given me credit for a fortnight for ten times the sum. I am, dear F—, your friend and hearty well-wisher.

I saw the family of the H—— yesterday, and asked them if you was in the land of the living. They said Yea—for they had just received a letter from you.—After all, I heartily forgive you—for you have done me a signal service in mortifying me, and it is this, I am determined to grow rich upon it.

Adieu, and God send you wealth and happiness—All compliments to ——. Before April next I am obliged to revisit your metropolis in my way to England.

LETTER XX.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse, June 9, 1763.

My dear Foley,
I THIS moment received yours—consequently the moment I got it I sat down to answer it—So much for a logical inference.

Now believe me I had never wrote you so testy a letter, had I not both loved and esteemed you—and it was merely in vindication of the rights of friendship that I wrote in a way as if I was hurt—for neglect me in your heart, I knew you could not, without cause; which my heart told me I never had—or will ever give you:—I was the best friends with you that ever I was in my life before my letter had got a league, and pleaded the true excuse for my friend, “That he was oppressed with a multitude of business.” Go on, my dear F., and have but that excuse (so much do I regard your interest), that I would be content to suffer a real evil without future murmuring—but in truth, my disappointment was partly chimerical at the bottom, having a letter of credit for two hundred pounds from a person I never saw, by me—but which, out of nicety of temper, I would not make any use of—I set out in two days for Bagnieres, but direct to me to Brousse, who will forward all my letters.—Dear F—, adieu.—Believe me yours affectionately.

LETTER XXI.

From the same to the same.

Montpellier, Jan. 5, 1764.

My dear friend,

You see I cannot pass over the fifth of the month without thinking of you and writing to you—The last is a periodical habit—The first is from my heart, and I do it oftener than I remember—however, from both motives together I maintain I have a right to the pleasure of a single line—be it only to tell me how your watch goes—You know how much happier it would make me to know that all things belonging to you went on well.—You are going to have them all to yourself (I hear), and that Mr. S—— is true to his first intention of leaving business—I hope this will enable you to accomplish yours in a shorter time, that you may get to your long-wished-for retreat of tranquillity and silence—When you have got to your fire-side, and into your arm-chair (and, by the bye, have another to spare for a friend), and are so much a sovereign as to sit in your furred cap, if you like it, though I should not (for a man's ideas are at least the cleaner for being dressed decently), why then it will be a miracle if I do not glide in like a ghost upon you—and in a very unghost-like fashion help you off with a bottle of your best wine.

Jan. 15.—It does not happen every day that a letter, begun in the most perfect health, should be concluded in the greatest weakness—I wish the vulgar high and low do not say it was a judgment upon me, for taking all this liberty with ghosts—Be it as it may—I took a ride, when the first part of this was wrote, towards Perenas—and returned home in a shivering fit, though I ought to have been in a fever, for I had tired my beast; and he was as unmoveable as Don Quixote's wooden horse, and my arm was half dislocated in whipping him—This, quoth I, is inhuman—No, says a peasant on foot behind me, I'll drive him home—so he laid on his posteriors, but 'twas needless—as his face was turned towards Montpellier, he began to trot.—But to return: this fever has confined me ten days in my bed—I have suffered in this scuffle with death terribly—but unless the spirit of prophecy deceive me—I shall not die but live—in the mean

time, dear F. let us live as merrily, but as innocently as we can—It has ever been as good, if not better, than a bishopric to me—and I desire no other—Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me yours.

Please to give the inclosed to Mr. T—, and tell him I thank him cordially from my heart for his great good-will.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. F.

Montpellier, Feb. 1, 1764.

I AM preparing, my dear Mrs. F., to leave France, for I am heartily tired of it—That insipidity there is in French characters has disgusted your friend Yorick.—I have been dangerously ill, and cannot think that the sharp air of Montpellier has been of service to me—and so my physicians told me when they had me under their hands for above a month—If you stay any longer here, sir, it will be fatal to you—And why, good people, were you not kind enough to tell me this sooner?—After having discharged them, I told Mrs. Sterne that I should set out for England very soon; but as she chooses to remain in France for two or three years, I have no objection, except that I wish my girl in England.—The states of Languedoc are met—'tis a fine raree show, with the usual accompaniments of fiddles, bears, and puppet-shows.—I believe I shall step into my post-chaise with more alacrity to fly from these sights, than a Frenchman would fly to them—and except a tear at parting with my little slut, I shall be in high spirits; and every step I take that brings me nearer England, will, I think, help to set this poor frame to rights. Now pray write to me, directed to Mr. F. at Paris, and tell me what I am to bring you over—How do I long to greet all my friends! few do I value more than yourself.—My wife chooses to go to Montauban, rather than stay here, in which I am truly passive—If this should not find you at Bath, I hope it will be forwarded to you, as I wish to fulfil your commissions—and so adieu—Accept every warm wish for your health, and believe me ever yours.

P. S. My physicians have almost poisoned me with what they call *bouillons ra-*

fraichissants—'tis a cock flayed alive and boiled with poppy seeds, then pounded in a mortar, afterwards passed through a sieve—There is to be one crawfish in it, and I was gravely told it must be a male one—a female would do me more hurt than good.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

Paris, May 15, 1764.

My dear Lydia,

By this time I suppose your mother and self are fixed at Montauban, and I therefore direct to your banker, to be delivered to you—I acquiesced in your staying in France—likewise it was your mother's wish—but I must tell you both (that unless your health had not been a plea made use of) I should have wished you both to return with me.—I have sent you the *Spectators*, and other books, particularly *Metastasio*; but I beg my girl to read the former, and only make the latter her amusement.—I hope you have not forgot my last request, to make no friendships with the French women—not that I think ill of them all, but sometimes women of the best principles are the most *insinuating*—nay I am so jealous of you, that I should be miserable were I to see you had the least grain of coquetry in your composition.—You have enough to do—for I have also sent you a guitar—and as you have no genius for drawing (though you never could be made to believe it), pray waste not your time about it—Remember to write to me as to a friend—in short, whatever comes into your little head, and then it will be natural.—If your mother's rheumatism continues, and she chooses to go to *Bagnieres*—tell her not to be stopped for want of money, for my purse shall be as open as my heart. I have preached at the Ambassador's chapel—*Hezekiah*—(an odd subject your mother will say). There was a concourse of all nations, and religions too.—I shall leave Paris in a few days.—I am lodged in the same hotel with Mr. T——;—they are good and generous souls—tell your mother that I hope she will write to me, and that when she does so, I may also receive a letter from my Lydia.

Kiss your mother from me, and believe me your affectionate, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Sterne to J— H— S—, Esq.

September 4, 1764.

Now, my dear dear Anthony—I do not think a week or ten days playing the good-fellow (at this very time) at Scarborough so abominable a thing—but if a man could get there cleverly, and every soul in the house in the mind to try what could be done in furtherance thereof, I have no one to consult in this affair—therefore, as a man may do worse things, the English of all which is this, that I am going to leave a few poor sheep here in the wilderness for fourteen days—and from pride and naughtiness of heart to see what is doing at Scarborough—steadfastly meaning afterwards to lead a new life, and strengthen my faith.—Now some folk say there is much company there—and some say not—and I believe there is neither the one nor the other—but will be both, if the world will have but a month's patience or so.—No, my dear H——, I did not delay sending your letter directly to the post—As there are critical times, or rather turns and revolutions in *** humours, I knew not what the delay of an hour might hazard—I will answer for him, he has seventy times seven forgiven you—and as often wished you at the d—I.—After many oscillations the pendulum will rest firm as ever.—

I send all kind compliments to sir C. D—— and G——s. I love them from my soul.—If G——t is with you, him also.—I go on, not rapidly, but well enough, with my uncle Toby's amours—There is no sitting, and cudgelling one's brains whilst the sun shines bright—'twill be all over in six or seven weeks, and there are dismal months enow after to endure suffocation by a brimstone fire-side.—If you can get to Scarborough, do.—A man who makes six tons of alum a week, may do any thing—Lord Granby is to be there—what a temptation! Yours affectionately, &c.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

York, Sept. 29, 1754.

My dear friend,

I HAVING just had the honour of a letter from Miss Tuting, full of the acknowledgments of your attention and kind services to her; I will not believe these arose from the D. of A——'s letters nor mine. Surely she needed no recommendation—the truest and most honest compliment I can pay you, is to say they came from your own good heart, only you was introduced to the object—for the rest followed in course—However, let me cast in my mite of thanks to the treasury which belongs to good natured actions. I have been with lord G——y these three weeks at Scarborough—the pleasures of which I found somewhat more exalted than those of Bagnieres last year.—I am now returned to my philosophical hut to finish *Tristram*, which I calculate will be ready for the world about Christmas, at which time I decamp from hence, and fix my head-quarters at London for the winter—unless my cough pushes me forwards to your metropolis—or that I can persuade some *gros* my lord to take a trip to you—I'll try if I can make him relish the joys of the *Tuilleries*, *Opera Comique*, &c.

I had this week a letter from Mrs. Sterne from Montauban, in which she tells me she has occasion for fifty pounds immediately—will you send an order to your correspondent at Montauban to pay her so much cash?—and I will in three weeks send as much to Becket—But as her purse is low, for God's sake write directly.—Now you must do something equally essential—to rectify a mistake in the mind of your correspondent there, who it seems gave her a hint not long ago, “that she was separated from me for life.”—Now as this is not true in the first place, and may give a disadvantageous impression of her to those she lives amongst—'twould be unmerciful to let her, or my daughter, suffer by it; so do be so good as to undeceive him—for in a year or two she proposes (and indeed I expect it with impatience from her) to rejoin me—and tell them I have all the confidence in the world she will not spend more than I can afford, and I only mentioned two hundred guineas a

year—because 'twas right to name some certain sum, for which I begged you to give her credit.—I write to you all of my most intimate concerns, as to a brother; so excuse me, dear Foley. God bless you.—Believe me, yours affectionately.

Compliments to M. Panchaud, d'Holbach, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. Sterne to David Garrick, Esq.

Bath, April 6, 1765.

I SCALP you!—my dear Garrick! my dear friend!—foul befall the man who hurts a hair of your head!—and so full was I of that very sentiment, that my letter had not been put into the post-office ten minutes, before my heart smote me; and I sent to recall it—but failed—You are sadly to blame, Shandy! for this, quoth I, leaning with my head on my hand, as I recriminated upon my false delicacy in the affair—Garrick's nerves (if he has any left) are as fine and delicately spun as thy own—his sentiments as honest and friendly—thou knowest, Shandy, that he loves thee—why wilt thou hazard him a moment's pain? Puppy, fool, coxcomb, jackass, &c. &c.—and so I balanced the account to your favour, before I received it drawn up in your way—I say your way—for it is not stated so much to your honour and credit, as I had passed the account before—for it was a most lamented truth, that I never received one of the letters your friendship meant me, except whilst in Paris.—O! how I congratulate you for the anxiety the world has, and continues to be under, for your return.—Return, return to the few who love you, and the thousands who admire you.—The moment you set your foot upon your stage—mark! I tell it you—by some magic, ir resisted power, every fibre about your heart will vibrate afresh, and as strong and feelingly as ever.—Nature, with glory at her back, will light up the torch within you—and there is enough of it left, to heat and enlighten the world these many, many, many years.

Heaven be praised! (I utter it from my soul) that your lady, and my Minerva, is in a condition to walk to Windsor—full rapturously will I lead the graceful

pilgrim to the temple, where I will sacrifice with the purest incense to her—but you may worship with me, or not—'twill make no difference either in the truth or warmth of my devotion—still (after all I have seen) I still maintain her peerless.

Powel! good Heaven!—give me some one with less smoke and more fire—There are, who, like the Pharisees, still think they shall be heard for *much* speaking—Come—come away, my dear Garrick, and teach us another lesson.

Adieu!—I love you dearly—and your lady better—not hobbilhorisally—but most sentimentally and affectionately—for I am yours (that is, if you never say another word about —) with all the sentiments of love and friendship you deserve from me.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. W.

Coxwold, May 23, 1765.

At this moment I am sitting in my summer-house with my head and heart full, not of my uncle Toby's amours with the widow Wadman, but my sermons—and your letter has drawn me out of a pensive mood—the spirit of it pleaseth me—but in this solitude, what can I tell or write to you but about myself?—I am glad that you are in love—'twill cure you at least of the spleen, which has a bad effect on both man and woman—I myself must ever have some Dulcinea in my head—it harmonizes the soul—and in those cases I first endeavour to make the lady believe so, or rather I begin first to make myself believe that I am in love—but I carry on my affairs quite in the French way, sentimentally—“*L'amour* (say they) *n'est rien sans sentiment.*” — Now, notwithstanding they make such a pother about the word, they have no precise idea annexed to it—And so much for the same subject called love.—I must tell you how I have just treated a French gentleman of fortune in France, who took a liking to my daughter—without any ceremony (having got my direction from my wife's banker) he wrote me word that he was in love with my daughter, and desired to know what *fortune* I would give her at present, and how much at my *death*—by the bye, I think there was very little *sentiment* on his

side—My answer was, “Sir, I shall give her ten thousand pounds the day of marriage—my calculation is as follows—she is not eighteen, you are sixty-two—there goes five thousand pounds—then, sir, you at least think her not ugly—she has many accomplishments, speaks Italian, French, plays upon the guitar, and as I fear you play upon no instrument whatever, I think you will be happy to take her at my terms, for here finishes the account of the ten thousand pounds.”—I do not suppose but he will take this as I mean—that is, a flat refusal—I have had a parsonage-house burnt down by the carelessness of my curate's wife—as soon as I can I must rebuild it, I trow—but I lack the means at present—yet I am never happier than when I have not a shilling in my pocket—for when I have, I can never call it my own. Adieu, my dear friend—may you enjoy better health than me, though not better spirits, for that is impossible. Yours sincerely.

My compliments to the Col.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

Naples, Feb. 3, 1766.

My dear girl,
Your letter, my Lydia, has made me both laugh and cry.—Sorry am I that you are both so afflicted with the ague, and by all means I wish you both to fly from Tours, because I remember it is situated between two rivers, la Loire and le Cher—which must occasion fogs, and damp unwholesome weather—therefore for the same reason go not to Bourges en Bresse—'tis as vile a place for agues.—I find myself infinitely better than I was—and hope to have added at least ten years to my life by this journey to Italy—the climate is heavenly, and I find new principles of health in me, which I have been long a stranger to—but trust me, my Lydia, I will find you out, wherever you are, in May. Therefore I beg you to direct to me at Belloni's at Rome, that I may have some idea where you will be then.—The account you give me of Mrs. C[—] is truly amiable, I shall ever honour her—Mr. C. is a diverting companion—what he said of your little French admirer was truly droll

—the marquis de — is an impostor, and not worthy of your acquaintance—he only pretended to know me, to get introduced to your mother—I desire you will get your mother to write to Mr. C. that I may discharge every debt, and then, my Lydia, if I live, the produce of my pen shall be yours—If fate reserves me not that—the humane and good, part for thy father's sake, part for thy own, will never abandon thee!—If your mother's health will permit her to return with me to England, your summers I will render as agreeable as I can at Coxwold—your winters at York—you know my publications call me to London. If Mr. and Mrs. C— are still at Tours, thank them from me for their cordiality to my wife and daughter. I have purchased you some little trifles, which I shall give you when we meet, as proofs of affection from your fond father.

LETTER XXIX.

David Hume, Esq. to —.

Edinburgh, Aug. 16, 1760.

Sir,

I AM not surprised to find by your letter, that Mr. Gray should have entertained suspicions with regard to the authenticity of these fragments of our Highland poetry. The first time I was shewn the copies of some of them in manuscript, by our friend John Home, I was inclined to be a little incredulous on that head; but Mr. Home removed my scruples, by informing me of the manner in which he procured them from Mr. Macpherson, the translator. These two gentlemen were drinking the waters together at Moffat last autumn; when their conversation fell upon Highland poetry, which Mr. Macpherson extolled very highly. Our friend, who knew him to be a good scholar and a man of taste, found his curiosity excited; and asked whether he had ever translated any of them? Mr. Macpherson replied, that he never had attempted any such thing; and doubted whether it was possible to transfuse such beauties into our language; but for Mr. Home's satisfaction, and in order to give him a general notion of the strain of that wild poetry, he would endeavour to turn one of them into English. He accordingly brought him one next day; which

our friend was so much pleased with, that he never ceased soliciting Mr. Macpherson till he insensibly produced that small volume which has been published.

After this volume was in every body's hands, and universally admired, we heard every day new reasons, which put the authenticity, not the great antiquity, which the translator ascribes to them, beyond all question: for their antiquity is a point which must be ascertained by reasoning; though the arguments he employs seem very probable and convincing. But certain it is, that these poems are in every body's mouth in the Highlands, have been handed down from father to son, and are of an age beyond all memory and tradition.

In the family of every Highland chieftain there was anciently retained a bard, whose office was the same with that of the Greek rhapsodists; and the general subject of the poems, which they recited, was the wars of Fingal; an epoch no less celebrated among them, than the wars of Troy among the Greek poets. This custom is not even yet altogether abolished; the bard and piper are esteemed the most honourable offices in a chieftain's family, and these two characters are frequently united in the same person. Adam Smith, the celebrated professor in Glasgow, told me, that the piper of the Argyleshire militia repeated to him all those poems which Mr. Macpherson has translated, and many more of equal beauty. Major Mackay, lord Rae's brother, also told me, that he remembers them perfectly; as likewise did the laird of Macfarlane, the greatest antiquarian whom we have in this country, and who insists so strongly on the historical truth, as well as on the poetical beauty of these productions. I could add the laird and lady Macleod to these authorities, with many more, if these were not sufficient; as they live in different parts of the Highlands, very remote from each other, and they could only be acquainted with poems that had become in a manner national works, and had gradually spread themselves into every mouth, and imprinted on every memory.

Every body in Edinburgh is so convinced of this truth, that we have endeavoured to put Mr. Macpherson on a way of procuring us more of these wild flowers. He is a modest sensible young man, not settled in any living, but employed as a

private tutor in Mr. Graham of Balgowan's family, a way of life which he is not fond of. We have therefore set about a subscription, of a guinea or two guineas a-piece, in order to enable him to quit that family, and undertake a mission into the Highlands, where he hopes to recover more of these Fragments. There is, in particular, a country surgeon somewhere in Lochaber, who, he says, can recite a great number of them, but never committed them to writing: as indeed the orthography of the Highland language is not fixed, and the natives have always employed more the sword than the pen. This surgeon has by heart the epic poem mentioned by Mr. Macpherson in his preface; and as he is somewhat old, and is the only person living that has it entire, we are in the more haste to recover a monument, which will certainly be regarded as a curiosity in the republic of letters.

I own, that my first and chief objection to the authenticity of these Fragments, was not on account of the noble and even tender strokes which they contain; for these are the offspring of Genius and Passion in all countries; I was only surprised at the regular plan which appears in some of these pieces, and which seems to be the work of a more cultivated age. None of the specimens of barbarous poetry known to us, the Hebrew, Arabian, or any other, contained this species of beauty: and if a regular epic poem, or even any thing of that kind, nearly regular, should also come from that rough climate, or uncivilised people, it would appear to me a phenomenon altogether unaccountable.

I remember, Mr. Macpherson told me, that the heroes of this Highland epic were not only, like Homer's heroes, their own butchers, bakers, and cooks, but also their own shoemakers, carpenters, and smiths. He mentioned an incident, which put this matter in a remarkable light. A warrior has the head of his spear struck off in battle; upon which he immediately retires behind the army, where a forge was erected; makes a new one; hurries back to the action; pierces his enemy, while the iron, which was yet red hot, hisses in the wound. This imagery you will allow to be singular, and so well imagined, that it would have been adopted by Homer, had the manners of the Greeks allowed him to have employed it.

I forgot to mention, as another proof of the authenticity of these poems, and even of the reality of the adventures contained in them, that the names of the heroes, Fingal, Oscur, Osur, Oscan, Dermid, are still given in the Highlands to large mastiffs, in the same manner as we affix to them the names of Cæsar, Pompey, Hector; or the French that of Marlborough.

It gives me pleasure to find, that a person of so fine a taste as Mr. Gray approves of these Fragments, as it may convince us, that our fondness of them is not altogether founded on national prepossessions, which, however, you know to be a little strong. The translation is elegant; but I made an objection to the author, which I wish you would communicate to Mr. Gray, that we may judge of the justness of it. There appeared to me many verses in his prose, and all of them in the same measure with Mr. Shenstone's famous ballad,

"Ye shepherds, so careless and free,
Whose flocks never carelessly roam," &c.

Pray ask Mr. Gray whether he made the same remark, and whether he thinks it a blemish? Yours most sincerely.

LETTER XXX.

David Hume, Esq. to Dr. Campbell.

Edinburgh, Jan. 7, 1762.

Dear sir,

It has so seldom happened that controversies in philosophy, much more in theology, have been carried on without producing a personal quarrel between the parties, that I must regard my present situation as somewhat extraordinary, who have reason to give you thanks, for the civil and obliging manner in which you have conducted the dispute against me, on so interesting a subject as that of miracles. Any little symptoms of vehemence, of which I formerly used the freedom to complain, when you favoured me with a sight of the manuscript, are either removed or explained away, or atoned for by civilities which are far beyond what I have any title to pretend to. It will be natural for you to imagine, that I will fall upon some shift to evade the force of your arguments, and to retain my former opinion in the point controverted between us; but it is impossible for me not to see the

ingenuity to your performance, and the great learning which you have displayed against me.

I consider myself as very much honoured in being thought worthy of an answer by a person of so much merit; and as I find that the public does you justice with regard to the ingenuity and good composition of your piece, I hope you will have no reason to repent engaging with an antagonist, whom perhaps in strictness you might have ventured to neglect. I own to you that I never felt so violent an inclination to defend myself as at present, when I am thus fairly challenged by you, and I think I could find something specious at least to urge in my defence; but as I had fixed a resolution, in the beginning of my life, always to leave the public to judge between my adversaries and me, without making any reply, I must adhere inviolably to this resolution, otherways my silence on any future occasion would be construed an inability to answer, and would be matter of triumph against me.

It may perhaps amuse you to learn the first hint which suggested to me that argument which you have so strenuously attacked. I was walking in the cloysters of the Jesuits College of La Fleche, a town in which I passed two years of my youth, and engaged in a conversation with a Jesuit of some parts and learning, who was relating to me, and urging some nonsensical miracle performed in their convent, when I was tempted to dispute against him; and as my head was full of the topics of my Treatise of Human Nature, which I was at this time composing, this argument immediately occurred to me, and I thought it very much gravelled my companion; but at last he observed to me, that it was impossible for that argument to have any solidity, because it operated equally against the Gospel as the Catholic miracles; which observation I thought proper to admit as a sufficient answer. I believe you will allow, that the freedom at least of this reasoning makes it somewhat extraordinary to have been the produce of a convent of Jesuits, though perhaps you may think the sophistry of it savours plainly of the place of its birth.

LETTER XXXI.

Dr. Smollett to Daniel Mackercher, Esq.*

Chelsea, Feb. 23, 1753.

Dear sir,

I SHALL take it as a particular favour, if you will peruse the inclosed rough draught of a letter, which I intend to send to Mr. Hume Campbell, provided you think it contains nothing actionable. I hope you will excuse this trouble, and believe me to be with equal sincerity and attachment, dear sir, your very humble servant.

Sir,

I HAVE waited several days in hope of receiving from you an acknowledgment touching those harsh, unjustifiable (and let me add), unmannerly expressions which you annexed to my name, in the Court of King's Bench, when you opened the cause depending between me and Peter Gordon; and as I do not find that you have discovered the least inclination to retract what you said to my prejudice, I have taken this method to refresh your memory, and to demand such satisfaction as a gentleman injured as I am has a right to claim.

The business of a counsellor is, I apprehend, to investigate the truth in behalf of his client; but surely he has no privilege to blacken and asperse the character of the other party, without any regard to veracity or decorum. That you assumed this unwarrantable privilege in commenting upon your brief, I believe you will not pretend to deny, when I remind you of those peculiar flowers of elocution which you poured forth on that notable occasion. First of all, in order to inspire the court with horror and contempt for the defendant, you gave the jury to understand that you did not know this Dr. Smollett; and, indeed, his character appeared in such a light from the facts contained in your brief, that you never should desire to know him. I should be glad to learn of what consequence it could be to the cause, whether you did or did not know the defendant; or whether you had or had not an incli-

* This gentleman's name is familiar to the public, as well from the account of his life inserted in *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, as from the part he took in the celebrated *Anglesea* cause.

nation to be acquainted with him? Sir, this was a pitiful personality, calculated to depreciate the character of a gentleman to whom you were a stranger, merely to gratify the rancour and malice of an abandoned fellow who had see'd you to speak in his cause. Did I ever seek your acquaintance, or court your protection? I had been informed, indeed, that you were a lawyer of some reputation, and, when the suit commenced, would have retained you for that reason, had not I been anticipated by the plaintiff; but, far from coveting your acquaintance, I never dreamed of exchanging a word with you on that or any other subject: you might therefore have spared your invidious declaration, until I had put it in your power to mortify me with a repulse, which, upon my honour, would never have been the case, were you a much greater man than you really are. Yet this was not the only expedient you used to prepossess the jury against me. You were hardy enough to represent me as a person devoid of all humanity and remorse; as a barbarous ruffian, who in a cowardly manner had, with two associates as barbarous as myself, called a peaceable gentleman out of his lodgings, and assaulted him in the dark, with intent to murder. Such an horrid imputation, publicly fixed upon a person whose innocence you could hardly miss to know, is an outrage, for which, I believe, I might find reparation from the law itself, notwithstanding your artful manner of qualifying the expression, by saying, provided the facts can be proved. This low subterfuge may, for aught I know, screen you from a prosecution at law, but can never acquit you in that court which every man of honour holds in his own breast. I say, you must have known my innocence from the weakness of the evidence which you produced, and with which you either were or ought to have been previously acquainted; as well as from my general character and that of my antagonist, which it was your duty to have learned. I will venture to say, you did know my character, and in your heart believed me incapable of such brutality as you laid to my charge. Surely, I do not over-rate my own importance in affirming, that I am not so obscure in life as to have escaped the notice of Mr. Hume Campbell; and I will be bold enough to challenge him and the whole

world to prove one instance in which my integrity was called, or at least left, in question. Have not I therefore reason to suppose that, in spite of your own internal conviction, you undertook the cause of a wretch, whose ingratitude, villany, and rancour, are, I firmly believe, without example in this kingdom; that you magnified a slight correction bestowed by his benefactor, in consequence of the most insolent provocation, into a deliberate and malicious scheme of assassination; and endeavoured, with all the virulence of defamation, to destroy the character, and even the life, of an injured person, who, as well as yourself, is a gentleman by birth, education, and profession? In favour of whom, and in consequence of what, was all this zeal manifested, all this slander exhausted, and all this scurrility discharged? Your client, whom you dignified with the title of Esquire, and endeavoured to raise to the same footing with me in point of station and character, you knew to be an abject miscreant, whom my compassion and humanity had lifted from the most deplorable scenes of distress; whom I had saved from imprisonment and ruin; whom I had clothed and fed for a series of years; whom I had occasionally assisted with my purse, credit, and influence. You knew, or ought to have known, that, after having received a thousand marks of my benevolence, and prevailed upon me to indorse notes for the support of his credit, he withdrew himself into the verge of the court, and took up his habitation in a paltry alehouse, where he not only set me and the rest of his creditors at defiance, but provoked me, by scurrilous and insolent letters and messages, to chastise him in such a manner as gave him an handle for this prosecution, in which you signalized yourself as his champion, for a very honourable consideration. There is something so palpably ungrateful, perfidious, and indeed diabolical, in the conduct of the prosecutor, that, even in these degenerate days, I wonder how he could find an attorney to appear in his behalf. *O tempora! O mores!*—After having thus sounded the trumpet of obloquy in your preamble, and tortured every circumstance of the plaintiff's evidence to my detriment and dishonour, you attempted to subject me to the ridicule of the court, by asking a question of my first witness, which had

no more relation to the cause, than if you had desired to know the name of his grandmother. What title had you to ask of a tradesman, if he knew me to be an author? What affinity had this question with the circumstances of the assault? Was not this foreign to the purpose? Was it not impertinent, and proposed with a view to put me out of countenance, and to raise the laugh of the spectators at my expense? There, indeed, you were disappointed, as you frequently are, in those little digressive efforts by which you make yourself remarkable. Though I do not pretend to possess that superlative degree of effrontery by which some people make a figure at the bar, I have assurance enough to stand the mention of my Works without blushing, especially when I despise the taste, and scorn the principles, of him who would turn them to my disgrace. You succeeded, however, in one particular; I mean, in raising the indignation of my witness; of which you took all imaginable advantage, puzzling, perplexing, and browbeating him with such artifice, eagerness, and insult, as overwhelmed him with confusion, and had well nigh deprived me of the benefit of his evidence. Luckily for me, the next gentleman who was called confirmed what the other had sworn, and proved to the satisfaction of the judge and jury, and even to your own conviction, that this terrible deliberate assassination was no more than a simple blow given to a rascal after repeated provocation, and that of the most flagrant kind; that no advantage was taken in point of weapons; and that two drabs, whom they had picked up for the purpose, had affirmed upon oath a downright falsehood, with a view to blast my reputation. You yourself was so conscious of this palpable detection, that you endeavoured to excuse them by a forced explanation, which, you may depend upon it, shall not screen them from a prosecution for perjury. I will not say, that this was like patronizing a couple of gypsies who had forsworn themselves, consequently forfeited all title to the countenance, or indeed forbearance, of the court; but this I will say, that your tenderness for them was of a piece with your whole behaviour to me, which I think was equally insolent and unjust: for, granting that you had really supposed me guilty of an intended

assassination, before the trial began; you saw me in the course of evidence acquitted of that suspicion, and heard the judge insist upon my innocence in his charge to the jury, who brought in their verdict accordingly. Then, sir, you ought, in common justice, to have owned yourself mistaken, or to have taken some other opportunity of expressing your concern for what you had said to my disadvantage; though even such an acknowledgment would not have been a sufficient reparation; because, before my witnesses were called, many persons left the court with impressions to my prejudice, conceived from the calumnies which they heard you espouse and encourage. On the whole, you opened the trial with such hyperbolical impetuosity, and conducted it with such particular bitterness and rancour, that every body perceived you were more than ordinarily interested; and I could not divine the mysterious bond of union that attached you to Peter Gordon, esq. until you furnished me with a key to the whole secret, by that strong emphasis with which you pronounced the words *Ferdinand Count Fathom*. Then I discovered the source of your good-will towards me, which is no other than the history of a law suit inserted in that performance, where the author takes occasion to observe, that the counsel behaved like men of consummate abilities in their profession; exerting themselves with equal industry, eloquence, and erudition, in their endeavours to perplex the truth, brow-beat the evidence, puzzle the judge, and mislead the jury. Did any part of this character come home to your own conscience? or did you resent it as a sarcasm levelled at the whole bench without distinction? I take it for granted, this must have been the origin of your enmity to me; because I can recollect no other circumstance in my conduct, by which I could incur the displeasure of a man whom I scarce knew by sight, and with whom I never had the least dispute, or indeed concern. If this was the case, you pay a very scurvy compliment to your own integrity, by fathering a character which is not applicable to any honest man, and give the world a handle to believe, that our courts of justice stand greatly in need of reformation. Indeed, the petulance, license, and buffonery of some lawyers in the exercise of their function, is a reproach upon

decency and a scandal to the nation; and it is surprising that the judge, who represents his majesty's person, should suffer such insults upon the dignity of the place. But, whatever liberties of this kind are granted to the counsel, no sort of freedom, it seems, must be allowed to the evidence, who, by the bye, are of much more consequence to the cause. You will take upon you to divert the audience at the expense of a witness, by impertinent allusions to some parts of his private character and affairs; but if he pretends to retort the joke, you insult, abuse, and bellow against him as an impudent fellow who fails in his respect to the court. It was in this manner you behaved to my first witness, whom you first provoked into a passion by injurious insinuations; then you took an advantage of the confusion which you had entailed upon him; and, lastly, you insulted him as a person who had shuffled in his evidence. This might have been an irreparable injury to the character of a tradesman, had he not been luckily known to the whole jury, and many other persons in court, as a man of unquestionable probity and credit. Sir, a witness has as good a title as you have to the protection of the court; and ought to have more, because evidence is absolutely necessary for the investigation of truth; whereas the aim of a lawyer is often to involve it in doubt and obscurity. Is it for this purpose you so frequently deviate from the point, and endeavour to raise the mirth of the audience with flat jokes and insipid similes? or, have you really so miserably mistaken your own talents, as to set up for the character of a man of humour? For my own part, were I disposed to be merry, I should never desire a more pregnant subject of ridicule than your own appearance and behaviour; but, as I am at present in a very serious mood, I shall content myself with demanding adequate reparation for the injurious treatment I have received at your hands; otherwise I will in four days put this letter in the press, and you shall hear in another manner—not from a ruffian and an assassin—but from an injured gentleman, who is not ashamed of subscribing himself.

Monday morning.

Dear sir,
I AM much mortified that my rascally

situation will not at present permit me to send more than the trifle enclosed, as nothing could give me more pleasure than an opportunity of shewing with how much friendship and esteem, I am, dear sir, most faithfully, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Dr. Isaac Schomberg to a Lady, on the Method of reading for Female Improvement.

Madam,

CONFORMABLE to your desire, and my promise, I present you with a few thoughts on the method of reading; which you would have had sooner, only that you gave me leave to set them down at my leisure hours. I have complied with your request in both these particulars; so that you see, madam, how absolute your commands are over me. If my remarks should answer your expectations, and the purpose for which they were intended; if they should in the least conduce to the spending your time in a more profitable and agreeable manner than most of your sex generally do, it will give me a pleasure equal at least to that you will receive.

It were to be wished, that the female part of the human creation, on whom Nature has poured out so many charms with so lavish a hand, would pay some regard to the cultivating their minds and improving their understanding. It is easily accomplished. Would they bestow a fourth part of the time they throw away on the trifles and gewgaws of dress, in reading proper books, it would perfectly answer their purpose. Not that I am against the ladies adorning their persons; let them be set off with all the ornaments that art and nature can conspire to produce for their embellishment, but let it be with reason and good sense, not caprice and humour; for there is good sense in dress, as in all things else. Strange doctrine to some! but I am sure, madam, you know there is—You practise it.

The first rule to be laid down to any one, who reads to improve, is never to read but with attention. As the abstruse parts of learning are not necessary to the accomplishment of one of your sex, a small degree of it will suffice. I would throw the subjects of which the ladies

ought not to be wholly ignorant, under the following heads :

History,
Morality,
Poetry.

The first employs the memory, the second the judgment, and the third the imagination.

Whenever you undertake to read History, make a small abstract of the memorable events, and set down in what year they happened. If you entertain yourself with the life of a famous person, do the same by his most remarkable actions, with the addition of the year and the place he was born at and died. You will find these great helps to your memory, as they will lead you to remember what you do not write down, by a sort of chain that links the whole history together.

Books on Morality deserve an exact reading. There are none in our language more useful and entertaining than the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians. They are the standards of the English tongue, and as such should be read over and over again ; for as we imperceptibly slide into the manners and habits of those persons with whom we most frequently converse, so reading being, as it were, a silent conversation, we insensibly write and talk in the style of the authors we have the most often read, and who have left the deepest impressions on our mind. Now, in order to retain what you read on the various subjects that fall under the head of Morality, I would advise you to mark with a pencil whatever you find worth remembering. If a passage should strike you, mark it down in the margin ; if an expression, draw a line under it ; if a whole paper in the fore-mentioned books, or any others which are written in the same loose and unconnected manner, make an asterisk over the first line. By these means you will select the most valuable, and they will sink deeper in your memory than the rest, on repeated reading, by being distinguished from them.

The last article is Poetry. The way of distinguishing good poetry from bad, is to turn it out of verse into prose, and see whether the thought is natural, and the words adapted to it ; or whether they are not too big and sounding, or too low and mean for the sense they would convey. This rule will prevent you from

being imposed on by bombast and fustian, which with many passes for sublime ; for smooth verses, which run off the ear with an easy cadence and harmonious turn, very often impose nonsense on the world, and are like your fine dressed beaux, who pass for fine gentlemen. Divest both from their outward ornaments, and people are surprised they could have been so easily deluded.

I have now, madam, given a few rules, and those such only as are really necessary. I could have added more ; but these will be sufficient to enable you to read without burdening your memory, and yet with another view besides that of barely killing time, as too many are accustomed to do.

The task you have imposed on me is a strong proof of your knowing the true value of time, and always having improved it to the best advantage, were there no other ; and that there are other proofs, those who have the pleasure of being acquainted with you can tell.

As for my part, madam, you have done me too much honour, by singling me out from all your acquaintance on this occasion, to say any thing that would not look like flattery ; you yourself would think it so, were I to do you the common justice all your friends allow you ; I must therefore be silent on this head, and only say, that I should think myself well rewarded in return, if you will believe me to be, with the utmost sincerity, as I really am, madam, your faithful humble servant.

LETTER XXXIII.

To Colonel R——s, in Spain.

BEFORE this can reach the best of husbands and the fondest lover, those tender names will be no more of concern to me. The indisposition in which you, to obey the dictates of your honour and duty, left me, has increased upon me ; and I am acquainted, by my physicians, I cannot live a week longer. At this time my spirits fail me ; and it is the ardent love I have for you that carries me beyond my strength, and enables me to tell you, the most painful thing in the prospect of death is, that I must part with you ; but let it be a comfort to you that I have no guilt hangs upon me, no unrepented folly that retards me ; but I

pass away my last hours in reflection upon the happiness we have lived in together, and in sorrow that it is soon to have an end. This is a frailty which I hope is so far from being criminal, that methinks there is a kind of piety in being so unwilling to be separated from a state which is the institution of Heaven, and in which we have lived according to its laws. As we know no more of the next life, but that it will be a happy one to the good, and miserable to the wicked, why may we not please ourselves at least, to alleviate the difficulty of resigning this being, in imagining that we shall have a sense of what passes below, and may possibly be employed in guiding the steps of those with whom we walked with innocence when mortal? Why may I not hope to go on in my usual work, and, though unknown to you, be assistant in all the conflicts of your mind? Give me leave to say to you, O best of men! that I cannot figure to myself a greater happiness than in such an employment; to be present at all the adventures to which human life is exposed; to administer slumber to thy eye-lids in the agonies of a fever; to cover thy beloved face in the day of battle; to go with thee a guardian angel, incapable of wound or pain: where I have longed to attend thee, when a weak, a fearful woman. These, my dear, are the thoughts with which I warm my poor languid heart; but indeed I am not capable, under my present weakness, of bearing the strong agonies of mind I fall into, when I form to myself the grief you must be in upon your first hearing of my departure. I will not dwell upon this, because your kind and generous heart will be but the more afflicted, the more the person, for whom you lament, offers you consolation. My last breath will, if I am myself, expire in a prayer for you. I shall never see thy face again. Farewell for ever.

LETTER XXXIV.

John Garden to Archbishop Secker.

Brechin, April 24, 1767.

MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,

May it please your grace,
I AM a layman, content with the fruit of my labour, and have nothing to ask for

myself. I am a Scots Whig and a Presbyterian; not quite so rigid, indeed, but I could conform to the Church of England, were it by law established: but I shall never wish to see it so here: our country is too barren and poor; and from the experience I have had of the clergy here, I shall never wish to see them possessed of power, the constant concomitant of great riches; so apt they are to domineer, or to side with those who are disposed to do so, when they can see their own interest in it. This I am sensible is no very plausible introduction in addressing one of your station; but plain truth tells best, and is always more prevalent than fiction.

I have lately read a book, published this year at Edinburgh, titled, *Principles Political and Religious*, by Mr. Norman Sievwright, minister of the authorised Episcopal congregation here, to be sold at A. Donaldson's shop, London. I am pleased with the performance; the more so, as an essay of its nature, from one of his profession in this country, would have been looked upon as quite exotic some years ago. The design is certainly laudable, to open the eyes of, and introduce loyalty among, a blind, deluded, and disaffected people: a design wherein the interest and happiness of Great Britain is not a little concerned, and of consequence worthy of your grace's attention, whom kind Providence has placed at the head of the Church of England.

I am absolutely unconnected with the author, either by blood or alliance, but I know him to be a good man and a loyal subject: and that the character I give will be confirmed by every honest man that knows him; and though altogether unknown to your grace, and even void of the improper and presumptuous ambition of being so, I have, without Mr. Sievwright's knowledge or participation, from the mere motive of public spirit, ventured to address you in this way, and under your correction to suggest, that the countenance your grace may be pleased to shew him, and your approbation of his design, will be a spur on him, and others, to exert themselves strenuously in the same way, and cannot miss to have a tendency to make us in this country more unanimous if not in religious, at least in political matters; which would be no small point gained: two rebellions in my time demonstrate the

ruth of this. Though my acquaintance
 and Mr. Sievwright's is of pretty long
 standing, sixteen years or thereby, I was
 yesterday in his house for the first time;
 saw his wife, a grave genteel woman
 big with child, and six young children,
 all clean and decently dressed, and every
 thing orderly. Mr. Sievwright was not
 at home. He has only forty pounds an-
 nually to support all this. Great must
 be the economy, considering the enor-
 mous price to which every thing has
 risen; for cold, I know, is the charity of
 no place. I never heard Mr. Sievwright
 complain; and I believe no man else
 ever did. I own I was moved at the de-
 cent solemnity which I observed; and,
 upon consideration, nothing could have
 hindered me from giving that relief
 which a good God and generous nature
 prompted, but want of ability. To whom
 shall I pour forth the emotions of my
 soul so properly on this affecting sub-
 ject as to him, who, next to our amiable
 King, is God's vicegerent for good in the
 island of Britain?—The humanity,
 generosity, and godlike disposition of
 soul, for which you are famed even in
 his remote corner, leaves no room to
 doubt, that you will unexpectedly send
 Mr. Sievwright that relief, which, upon
 due consideration, you shall find his
 merit deserving of, either by calling him
 to some small benefice in England, or
 otherwise, as to your great wisdom shall
 seem most meet. These prudential and
 charitable suggestions are submitted to
 you with all humility. Begging pardon
 for this great and uncommon piece of
 presumption, I have, with the most pro-
 found regard, the honour to be, my lord,
 your grace's most obedient and most
 humble servant.

LETTER XXXV.

*Archbishop Secker to John Garden, in
 answer to the above.*

Lambeth, May 25, 1767.

Sir,

BEG your pardon that I have suffered
 your letter, in this busy time, to lie so
 long unanswered. And I hope the plain
 speaking of an English Episcopal Whig
 will be as acceptable to you, as that of
 a Scotch Presbyterian is to me. Your
 established Church hath as much power,
 believe, as ours hath, or more, though

less wealth. And its wealth, perhaps,
 is not so much less as you may imagine,
 allowing for the different prices of things;
 only with you the shares are nearly alike.
 I wish the incomes of your ministers
 were somewhat greater, and those of
 ours somewhat more equally divided. I
 wish too that all your Episcopal clergy
 were friends to the government; and
 that all the Presbyterians were as candid
 as you towards such of them as are. But
 however vain it may be to form wishes
 about others, each person may endeavour
 to act rightly himself. My business is
 not to abuse either my power, by lording
 it over God's heritage, or my wealth to
 the purposes of luxury or covetousness,
 but to do as much good as I can with
 both. One part of it I am sure you have
 done, by recommending Mr. Sievwright
 to me. I have heard of a performance of
 his relative to the Hebrew language, for
 which I am inquiring. I have got his
 Principles Religious and Political; a
 work that shews much good sense and
 reading, and hath given me much in-
 formation concerning the state of episco-
 pacy in Scotland. I should be glad to
 see him rewarded in proportion to his
 merit; but one half of the preferments in
 my gift are no better, all things con-
 sidered, than what he hath already; and
 there are, amongst the English clergy,
 thrice as many claimants on good grounds,
 for the other half, as I shall live to gra-
 tify. Besides, I should do Scotland an
 injury by taking such a man out of it. I
 must therefore content myself with de-
 siring you to put the inclosed little note
 into his hands, and to tell him, that if I
 live another year, and do not forget
 (which last I hope you will prevent),
 notice shall be taken of him again, by
 your friend and servant.

LETTER XXXVI.

*John Garden to Archbishop Secker, in re-
 turn to the above.*

June 5, 1767.

May it please your grace,

I AM instantly favoured with yours of
 the 25th ult. and have communicated
 the same to Mr. Sievwright. The ho-
 nour you have conferred on me by your
 speedy and effectual reply, though far
 beyond what I could have hoped for, is
 at present swallowed up in the more sub-

stantial joy which I feel in living in those days when one is found at the head of the Church of England, who knows so well to make a proper use of that power and those riches, which Almighty Goodness, out of mercy to mankind, has been graciously pleased to bestow upon so much merit. Methinks at present I feel and fully understand what St. Paul meant, when he said, "that for a good man one would even dare to die." What Mr. Sieywright's feelings are, your grace will best understand from himself, for he also is to write you. Sure I am I surprised him. From the experience I have of him, I have reason to think, that the more your grace knows of him, the better you will be pleased with him, and the less you'll think your favours misapplied. He is a man of learning, and one whose walk and conversation seem worthy of his calling. He has now got the seventh child, and the wife is presently on the straw, so that the ten-pound note came seasonably. May those sensations that a good man feels upon doing a generous action be your grace's constant attendant: in one word, may God bless you and preserve you long to bless others! With the greatest regard and affection, I am your grace's, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

Archbishop Secker¹ to a Clergyman who applied to him for Advice on his Son's becoming a Calvinist.

I AM very sorry that your son hath given you cause of uneasiness. But as a zeal of God, though in part not according to knowledge, influences him, his present state is far better than that of a profane or vicious person; and there is ground to hope, that through the divine blessing on your mild instructions and affection-

ate expostulations, he may be gradually brought into a temper every way Christian. Perhaps you and he differ, even now, less than you imagine: for I have observed, that the Methodists and their opposers are apt to think too ill of each other's notions. Our clergy have dwelt too much upon mere morality, and too little on the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel: and hence they have been charged with being more deficient in this last respect than they are; and even with disbelieving, or, however, slighting, the principal points of Revelation. They in their turns have reproached their accusers with enthusiastic imaginations, irrational tenets, and disregard to the common social duties, of which many of them perhaps are little if at all guilty. Who the author of the Address to the Clergy*, &c. is, I am totally ignorant: he seems a pious and well-meaning man, but grievously uncharitable in relation to the clergy, without perceiving it, and a little tinctured with antinomianism—I hope without being hurt by it himself. God grant that nothing which he hath written may hurt others! As Mr. P—— mentions Mr. B——t to your son, I send you some letters relative to him, which will shew you more fully my way of thinking about Methodists, and persons considered as a-kin to them: you will be pleased to return them. For the same purpose I add a copy of an unpublished, though printed, charge, which you may keep as a present from your loving brother, &c.

Since Mr. B——t left my diocese, I have never heard of him till now.

* This was a pamphlet entitled, "An Address to the Clergy, concerning their Departure from the Doctrines of the Reformation," dedicated to his grace the archbishop of Canterbury. By a member of the established Church, 8vo. 1767.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT, NARRATIVE, & MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION III.

FROM THE LETTERS OF THE LATE EARL OF CHATHAM, MRS. ELIZABETH MONTAGU, LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE, LORD CHESTERFIELD, DOCTOR JOHNSON, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew Thomas Pitt, Esq. (afterwards Lord Camelford).

My dear child,

I AM extremely pleased with your translation now it is writ over fair. It is very close to the sense of the original, and done, in many places, with much spirit, as well as the numbers not lame, or rough. However, an attention to Mr. Pope's numbers will make you avoid some ill sound and hobbling of the verse, by only transposing a word or two, in many instances. I have, upon reading the eclogue over again, altered the third, fourth, and fifth lines, in order to bring them nearer to the Latin, as well as to render some beauty which is contained in the repetition of words in tender passages; for example, *Nos patriæ fines, et dulcia linquimus arva; Nos patriam fugimus: tu, Tityre, lentus in umbrâ Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas.* "We leave our native land, these fields so sweet; Our country leave: at ease, in cool retreat, You, Thyrsis, bid the woods fair Daphne's name repeat." I will desire you to write over another copy with this alteration, and also to write *smoaks* in the plural number, in the last line but one. You give me great pleasure, my dear child, in the progress you have made. I will recommend to Mr. Leech to carry you quite through Virgil's *Æneid* from beginning to ending. Pray shew him this letter, with

my service to him, and thanks for his care of you. For English poetry, I recommend Pope's translation of Homer, and Dryden's Fables in particular. I am not sure if they are not called Tales, instead of Fables. Your cousin, whom I am sure you can overtake if you will, has read Virgil's *Æneid* quite through, and much of Horace's Epistles. Terence's Plays I would also desire Mr. Leech to make you perfect master of. Your cousin has read them all. Go on, my dear, and you will at least equal him. You are so good, that I have nothing to wish, but that you may be directed to proper books; and I trust to your spirit, and desire to be praised for things that deserve praise, for the figure you will hereafter make. God bless you, my dear child. Your most affectionate uncle.

LETTER II.

From the same to the same.

Bath, Oct. 12, 1751.

My dear nephew,
As I have been moving about from place to place, your letter reached me here, at Bath, but very lately, after making a considerable circuit to find me. I should have otherwise, my dear child, returned you thanks for the very great pleasure you have given me, long before now. The very good account you give me of your studies, and that delivered in very good Latin, for your time, has filled me with the highest expectation of your fu-

ture improvements : I see the foundations so well laid, that I do not make the least doubt but you will become a perfect good scholar ; and have the pleasure and applause that will attend the several advantages hereafter, in the future course of your life, that you can only acquire now by your emulation and noble labours in the pursuit of learning, and of every acquirement that is to make you superior to other gentlemen. I rejoice to hear that you have begun Homer's Iliad ; and have made so great a progress in Virgil. I hope you taste and love those authors particularly. You cannot read them too much ; they are not only the two greatest poets, but they contain the finest lessons for your age to imbibe : lessons of honour, courage, disinterestedness, love of truth, command of temper, gentleness of behaviour, humanity, and, in one word, virtue in its true signification. Go on, my dear nephew, and drink as deep as you can of these divine springs : the pleasure of the draught is equal at least to the prodigious advantages of it to the heart and morals. I hope you will drink them as somebody does in Virgil, of another sort of cup : *Ille impiger hausit spumantem pateram.*

I shall be highly pleased to hear from you, and to know what authors give you most pleasure. I desire my service to Mr. Leech : pray tell him I will write to him soon about your studies.

I am, with the greatest affection, my dear child, your loving uncle.

LETTER III.

*From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew
Thomas Pitt, Esq.*

Bath, Jan. 12, 1754.

My dear nephew,

Your letter from Cambridge affords me many very sensible pleasures : first, that you are at last in a proper place for study and improvement, instead of losing any more of that most precious thing, time, in London. In the next place, that you seem pleased with the particular society you are placed in, and with the gentleman to whose care and instructions you are committed : and, above all, I applaud the sound, right sense, and love of virtue, which appears through your whole letter. You are already possessed of the true clue to guide you through this dan-

gerous and perplexing part of your life's journey, the years of education ; and upon which, the complexion of all the rest of your days will infallibly depend ; I say you have the true clue to guide you, in the maxim you lay down in your letter to me ; namely, that the use of learning is, to render a man more wise and virtuous ; not merely to make him more learned. *Macte tuâ virtute* : Go on, my dear boy, by this golden rule, and you cannot fail to become every thing your generous heart prompts you to wish to be, and that mine most affectionately wishes for you. There is but one danger in your way ; and that is, perhaps, natural enough to your age, the love of pleasure, or the fear of close application and laborious diligence. With the last there is nothing you may not conquer : and the first is sure to conquer and enslave whoever does not strenuously resist the first allurements of it, lest by small indulgencies he fall under the yoke of irresistible habit. *Vitanda est improba Siren, Desidia*, I desire may be affixt to the curtains of your bed, and to the walls of your chambers. If you do not rise early, you never can make any progress worth talking of : and another rule is, If you do not set apart your hours of reading, and never suffer yourself or any one else to break in upon them, your days will slip through your hands, unprofitably and frivolously ; unpraised by all you wish to please, and really unenjoyable to yourself. Be assured, whatever you take from pleasure, amusements, or indolence, for these first few years of your life, will repay you a hundred-fold, in the pleasures, honours, and advantages of all the remainder of your days. My heart is so full of the most earnest desire that you should do well, that I find my letter has run into some length, which you will, I know, be so good to excuse. There remains now nothing to trouble you with, but a little plan for the beginning of your studies, which I desire, in a particular manner, may be exactly followed in every tittle. You are to qualify yourself for the part in society to which your birth and estate call you. You are to be a gentleman of such learning and qualifications as may distinguish you in the service of your country hereafter ; not a pedant, who reads only to be called learned, instead of considering learning as an instrument only for action. Give me leave

therefore, my dear nephew, who have gone before you, to point out to you the dangers in your road; to guard you against such things as I experience my own defects to arise from; and at the same time, if I have had any little successes in the world, to guide you to what I have drawn many helps from. I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman who is your tutor, but I dare say he is every way equal to such a charge, which I think no small one. You will communicate this letter to him, and I hope he will be so good to concur with me, as to the course of study I desire you may begin with; and that such books, and such only, as I have pointed out, may be read. They are as follow: Euclid; a Course of Logic; a Course of Experimental Philosophy; Locke's Conduct of the Understanding; his Treatise also on the Understanding; his Treatise on Government, and Letters on Toleration. I desire, for the present, no books of poetry, but Horace and Virgil: of Horace the Odes, but, above all, the Epistles and Ars Poetica. These parts, *Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ*. Fully de Officiis, de Amicitia, de Senectute. His Catilinarian Orations and Philippics. Sallust. At leisure hours, an abridgment of the History of England to be run through, in order to settle in the mind a general chronological order and series of principal events, and succession of kings: proper books of English history, on the true principles of our happy constitution, shall be pointed out afterwards. Burnet's History of the Reformation, abridged by himself, to be read with great care. Father Paul on Beneficiary Matters in English. A French master, and only Moliere's Plays to be read with him, or by yourself, till you have gone through them all. Spectators, especially Mr. Addison's papers, to be read very frequently at broken times in your room. I make it my request, that you will forbear drawing, totally, while you are at Cambridge; and not meddle with Greek, otherwise than to know a little the etymology of words in Latin, or English, or French; nor to meddle with Italian. I hope this little course will soon be run through: I intend it as a general foundation for many things of infinite utility, to come as soon as this is finished.

Believe me, with the truest affection, my dear nephew, ever yours.

Keep this letter and read it again.

LETTER IV.

From the same to the same.

Bath, Jan. 14, 1754.

My dear nephew,

You will hardly have read over one very long letter from me before you are troubled with a second. I intended to have writ soon, but I do it the sooner on account of your letter to your aunt, which she transmitted to me here. If any thing, my dear boy, could have happened to raise you higher in my esteem, and to endear you more to me, it is the amiable abhorrence you feel for the scene of vice and folly (and of real misery and perdition, under the false notion of pleasure and spirit), which has opened to you at your college, and at the same time the manly, brave, generous, and wise resolution and true spirit, with which you resisted and repulsed the first attempts upon a mind and heart, I thank God, infinitely too firm and noble, as well as too elegant and enlightened, to be in any danger of yielding to such contemptible and wretched corruptions. You charm me with the description of Mr. Wheler*; and while you say you could adore him, I could adore you for the natural, genuine love of virtue, which speaks in all you feel, say, or do. As to your companions, let this be your rule. Cultivate the acquaintance with Mr. Wheler which you have so fortunately begun: and in general, be sure to associate with men much older than yourself: scholars whenever you can; but always with men of decent and honourable lives. As their age and learning, superior both to their own, must necessarily, in good sense, and in the view of acquiring knowledge from them, entitle them to all deference, and submission of your own lights to theirs, you will particularly practise that first and greatest rule for pleasing in conversation, as well as for drawing instruction and improvement from the

* The rev. John Wheler, præbendary of Westminster. The friendship formed between this gentleman and lord Camelford at so early a period of their lives was founded in mutual esteem, and continued uninterrupted till lord Camelford's death.

company of one's superiors in age and knowledge ; namely, to be a patient, attentive, and well-bred hearer, and to answer with modesty ; to deliver your own opinions sparingly, and with proper diffidence ; and if you are forced to desire further information or explanation upon a point, to do it with proper apologies for the trouble you give : or if obliged to differ, to do it with all possible candour, and an unprejudiced desire to find and ascertain truth, with an entire indifference to the side on which that truth is to be found. There is likewise a particular attention required to contradict with good manners ; such as, “ begging pardon,” “ begging leave to doubt,” and such like phrases. Pythagoras enjoined his scholars an absolute silence for a long noviciate. I am far from approving such a taciturnity : but I highly recommend the end and intent of Pythagoras's injunction ; which is, to dedicate the first parts of life more to hear and learn, in order to collect materials, out of which to form opinions founded on proper lights, and well-examined sound principles, than to be presuming, prompt, and flippant in hazarding one's own slight crude notions of things ; and thereby exposing the nakedness and emptiness of the mind, like a house opened to company before it is fitted either with necessities, or any ornaments for their reception and entertainment. And not only will this disgrace follow from such temerity and presumption, but a more serious danger is sure to ensue, that is, the embracing errors for truths, prejudices for principles ; and when that is once done (no matter how vainly and weakly), the adhering perhaps to false and dangerous notions, only because one has declared for them, and submitting, for life, the understanding and conscience to a yoke of base and servile prejudices, vainly taken up and obstinately retained. This will never be your danger ; but I thought it not amiss to offer these reflections to your thoughts. As to your manner of behaving towards these unhappy young gentlemen you describe, let it be manly and easy ; decline their parties with civility ; retort their raillery with raillery, always tempered with good-breeding ; if they banter your regularity, order, decency, and love of study, banter in return their neglect of

them ; and venture to own frankly, that you came to Cambridge to learn what you can, not to follow what they are pleased to call pleasure. In short, let your external behaviour to them be as full of politeness and ease as your inward estimation of them is full of pity, mixed with contempt. I come now to the part of the advice I have to offer to you, which most nearly concerns your welfare, and upon which every good and honourable purpose of your life will assuredly turn ; I mean the keeping up in your heart the true sentiments of religion. If you are not right towards God, you can never be so towards man ; the noblest sentiment of the human breast is here brought to the test. Is gratitude in the number of a man's virtues ? If it be, the highest Benefactor demands the warmest returns of gratitude, love, and praise : *Ingratum qui dixerit, omnia dixit*. If a man wants this virtue, where there are infinite obligations to excite and quicken it, he will be likely to want all others towards his fellow-creatures, whose utmost gifts are poor compared to those he daily receives at the hands of his never-failing Almighty Friend. “ Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,” is big with the deepest wisdom : “ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ; and an upright heart, that is understanding.” This is eternally true, whether the wits and rakes of Cambridge allow it or not : nay, I must add of this religious wisdom, “ Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace,” whatever your young gentlemen of pleasure think of a whore and a bottle, a tainted health and battered constitution. Hold fast therefore by this sheet-anchor of happiness, Religion ; you will often want it in the times of most danger, the storms and tempests of life. Cherish true religion as preciously as you will fly with abhorrence and contempt superstition and enthusiasm. The first is the perfection and glory of the human nature ; the two last, the deprivation and disgrace of it. Remember the essence of religion is, a heart void of offence towards God and man ; not subtle speculative opinions, but an active vital principle of faith. The words of a heathen were so fine that I must give them to you : *Compositum jus, fasque animi, sanctosque recessus*

mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto.

Go on, my dear child, in the admirable dispositions you have towards all that is right and good, and make yourself the love and admiration of the world! I have neither paper nor words to tell you how tenderly I am yours.

LETTER V.

*From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew
Thomas Pitt, Esq.*

Bath, Jan. 24, 1754.

I WILL not lose a moment before I return my most tender and warm thanks to the most amiable, valuable, and noble-minded of youths, for the infinite pleasure his letter gives me. My dear nephew, what a beautiful thing is genuine goodness, and how lovely does the human mind appear in its native purity, (in a nature as happy as yours), before the taints of a corrupted world have touched it! To guard you from the fatal effects of all the dangers that surround and beset youth (and many they are, *nam variae illudunt pestes*), I thank God, is become my pleasing and very important charge; your own choice, and our nearness in blood, and still more a dearer and nearer relation of hearts, which I feel between us, all concur to make it so. I shall seek then every occasion, my dear young friend, of being useful to you, by offering you those lights, which one must have lived some years in the world to see the full force and extent of, and which the best mind and clearest understanding will suggest imperfectly, in any case, and in the most difficult, delicate, and essential points perhaps not at all, till experience, that dear-bought instructor, comes to our assistance. What I shall therefore make my task (a happy delightful task, if I prove a safeguard to so much opening virtue), is to be for some years, what you cannot be to yourself, your experience; experience anticipated, and ready digested for your use. Thus we will endeavour, my dear child, to join the two best seasons of life, to establish your virtue and your happiness upon solid foundations: *miscens autumnus et veris honores*. So much in general. I will now, my dear nephew, say a few

things to you upon a matter where you have surprisingly little to learn, considering you have seen nothing but Bo-connock; I mean, behaviour. Behaviour is of infinite advantage or prejudice to a man, as he happens to have formed it to a graceful, noble, engaging, and proper manner, or to a vulgar, coarse, ill-bred, or awkward and ungenteel one. Behaviour, though an external thing, which seems rather to belong to the body than to the mind, is certainly founded in considerable virtues; though I have known instances of good men, with something very revolting and offensive in their manner of behaviour, especially when they have the misfortune to be naturally very awkward and ungenteel; and which their mistaken friends have helped to confirm them in, by telling them, they were above such trifles as being genteel, dancing, fencing, riding, and doing all manly exercises with grace and vigour. As if the body, because inferior, were not a part of the composition of man; and the proper, easy, ready, and graceful use of himself, both in mind and limb, did not go to make up the character of an accomplished man. You are in no danger of falling into this preposterous error: and I had a great pleasure in finding you, when I first saw you in London, so well disposed by nature, and so properly attentive to make yourself genteel in person, and well-bred in behaviour. I am very glad you have taken a fencing-master: that exercise will give you some manly, firm, and graceful attitudes; open your chest, place your head upright, and plant you well upon your legs. As to the use of the sword, it is well to know it; but remember, my dearest nephew, it is a science of defence: and that a sword can never be employed by the hand of a man of virtue, in any other cause. As to the carriage of your person, be particularly careful, as you are tall and thin, not to get a habit of stooping; nothing has so poor a look: above all things avoid contracting any peculiar gesticulations of the body, or movements of the muscles of the face. It is rare to see in any one a graceful laughter; it is generally better to smile than laugh out, especially to contract a habit of laughing at small or no jokes. Sometimes it would be affectation, or worse, mere moroseness, not to laugh heartily, when the

truly ridiculous circumstances of an incident, or the true pleasantry and wit of a thing, call for and justify it; but the trick of laughing frivolously is by all means to be avoided: *Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est*. Now as to politeness; many have attempted definitions of it; I believe it is best to be known by description; definition not being able to comprise it. I would however venture to call it benevolence in trifles, or the preference of others to ourselves in little daily, hourly, occurrences in the commerce of life. A better place, a more commodious seat, priority in being helped at table, &c., what is it, but sacrificing ourselves in such trifles to the convenience and pleasure of others? And this constitutes true politeness. It is a perpetual attention (by habit it grows easy and natural to us) to the little wants of those we are with, by which we either prevent or remove them. Bowing, ceremonious, formal compliments, stiff civilities, will never be politeness: that must be easy, natural, unstudied, manly, noble. And what will give this, but a mind benèvolent, and perpetually attentive to exert that amiable disposition in trifles towards all you converse and live with? Benevolence in greater matters takes a higher name, and is the queen of virtues. Nothing is so incompatible with politeness as any trick of absence of mind. I would trouble you with a word or two more upon some branches of behaviour, which have a more serious moral obligation in them than those of mere politeness; which are equally important in the eye of the world. I mean a proper behaviour, adapted to the respective relations we stand in, towards the different ranks of superiors, equals, and inferiors. Let your behaviour towards superiors in dignity, age, learning, or any distinguished excellence, be full of respect, deference, and modesty. Towards equals, nothing becomes a man so well as well-bred ease, polite freedom, generous frankness, manly spirit, always tempered with gentleness and sweetness of manner, noble sincerity, candour, and openness of heart, qualified and restrained within the bounds of discretion and prudence, and ever limited by a sacred regard to secrecy in all things intrusted to it, and an inviolable attachment to your word. To

inferiors, gentleness, condescension, and affability, is the only dignity. Towards servants, never accustom yourself to rough and passionate language. When they are good, we should consider them as *humiles amici*, as fellow Christians, *ut conservi*; and when they are bad, pity, admonish, and part with them if incorrigible. On all occasions beware, my dear child, of Anger, that dæmon, that destroyer of our peace. *Ira furor brevis est: animum rege: qui, nisi paret, imperat: hunc frans, hunc tu compesce catena.*

Write soon, and tell me of your studies. Your ever affectionate.

LETTER VI.

From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew Thomas Pitt, Esq.

Bath, Feb. 3, 1754.

NOTHING can, or ought to give me a higher satisfaction, than the obliging manner in which my dear nephew receives my most sincere and affectionate endeavours to be of use to him. You much overrate the obligation, whatever it be, which youth has to those who have trod the paths of the world before them, for their friendly advice how to avoid the inconveniences, dangers, and evils, which they themselves may have run upon for want of such timely warnings, and to seize, cultivate, and carry forward towards perfection those advantages, graces, virtues, and felicities, which they may have totally missed, or stopped short in the generous pursuit. To lend this helping hand to those, who are beginning to tread the slippery way, seems, at best, but an office of common humanity to all; but to withhold it from one we truly love, and whose heart and mind bear every genuine mark of the very soil proper for all the amiable, manly, and generous virtues to take root, and bear their heavenly fruit; inward, conscious peace, fame amongst men, public love, temporal and eternal happiness;—to withhold it, I say, in such an instance, would deserve the worst of names. I am greatly pleased, my dear young friend, that you do me the justice to believe I do not mean to impose any yoke of authority upon your understanding and conviction. I wish to warn, admonish, instruct, enlighten, and con-

vince your reason; and so determine your judgment to right things, when you shall be made to see that they are right; not to overbear, and impel you to adopt any thing before you perceive it to be right or wrong, by the force of authority. I hear with great pleasure, that Locke lay before you, when you writ last to me; and I like the observation that you make from him, that we must use our own reason, not that of another, if we would deal fairly by ourselves, and hope to enjoy a peaceful and contented conscience. This precept is truly worthy of the dignity of rational natures. But here, my dear child, let me offer one distinction to you, and it is of much moment: it is this: Mr. Locke's precept is applicable only to such opinions as regard moral or religious obligations, and which as such our own consciences alone can judge and determine for ourselves: matters of mere expediency, that affect neither honour, morality, or religion, were not in that great and wise man's view: such are the usages, forms, manners, modes, proprieties, decorum, and all those numberless ornamental little acquirements, and genteel well-bred attentions, which constitute a proper, graceful, amiable, and noble behaviour. In matters of this kind, I am sure your own reason, to which I shall always refer you, will at once tell you, that you must, at first, make use of the experience of others; in effect, see with their eyes, or not be able to see at all; for the ways of the world, as to its usages and exterior manners, as well as to all things of expediency and prudential considerations, a moment's reflection will convince a mind as right as yours, must necessarily be to inexperienced youth, with ever so fine natural parts, a *terra incognita*. As you would not therefore attempt to form notions of China or Persia, but from those who have travelled those countries, and the fidelity and sagacity of whose relations you can trust; so will you, as little, I trust, prematurely form notions of your own, concerning that usage of the world (as it is called) into which you have not yet travelled, and which must be long studied and practised, before it can be tolerably well known. I can repeat nothing to you of so infinite consequence to your future welfare, as to conjure you not to be hasty in taking up notions and opi-

nions: guard your honest and ingenuous mind against this main danger of youth: with regard to all things, that appear not to your reason, after due examination, evident duties of honour, morality, or religion (and in all such as do, let your conscience and reason determine your notions and conduct), in all other matters, I say, be slow to form opinions, keep your mind in a candid state of suspense, and open to full conviction when you shall procure it; using in the mean time the experience of a friend you can trust, the sincerity of whose advice you will try and prove by your own experience hereafter, when more years shall have given it to you. I have been longer upon this head than, I hope, there was any occasion for; but the great importance of the matter, and my warm wishes for your welfare, figure, and happiness, have drawn it from me. I wish to know if you have a good French master: I must recommend the study of the French language, to speak and write it correctly, as to grammar and orthography, as a matter of the utmost and indispensable use to you, if you would make any figure in the great world. I need say no more to enforce this recommendation: when I get to London, I will send you the best French dictionary. Have you been taught geography and the use of the globes by Mr. Leech? If not, pray take a geography master and learn the use of the globes: it is soon known. I recommend to you to acquire a clear and thorough notion of what is called the solar system; together with the doctrine of comets. I wanted as much, or more, to hear of your private reading at home, as of public lectures, which I hope, however, you will frequent for example's sake. Pardon this long letter, and keep it by you if you do not hate it. Believe me, my dear nephew, ever affectionately,

Yours.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same.

Bath, March 30, 1754.

My dear nephew,
I AM much obliged to you for your kind remembrance and wishes for my health. It is much recovered by the regular fit of gout, of which I am still lame in both feet, and I may hope for better health

hereafter in consequence. I have thought it long since we conversed: I waited to be able to give you a better account of my health, and in part, to leave you time to make advances in your plan of study, of which I am very desirous to hear an account. I desire you will be so good to let me know particularly, if you have gone through the Abridgment of Burnet's History of the Reformation, and the Treatise of Father Paul on Benefices; also how much of Locke you have read. I beg of you not to mix any other English reading with what I recommend to you. I propose to save you much time and trouble, by pointing out to you such books, in succession, as will carry you the shortest way to the things you must know to fit yourself for the business of the world, and give you the clearer knowledge of them, by keeping them unmixed with superfluous, vain, empty trash. Let me hear, my dear child, of your French also; as well as of those studies which are more properly university studies. I cannot tell you better how truly and tenderly I love you, than by telling you I am most solicitously bent on your doing every thing that is right, and laying the foundations of your future happiness and figure in the world, in such a course of improvement, as will not fail to make you a better man, while it makes you a more knowing one. Do you rise early? I hope you have already made to yourself the habit of doing it: if not, let me conjure you to acquire it. Remember your friend Horace; *Et ni Posces ante diem librum cum lumine, si non latentes animum studiis et rebus honestis, Invidiâ vel amore miser torquebere*. Adieu. Your ever affectionate uncle.

LETTER VIII.

*From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew
Thomas Pitt, Esq.*

Bath, May 4, 1754.

My dear nephew,
I USE a pen with some difficulty, being still lame in my hand with the gout: I cannot, however, delay writing this line to you on the course of English history I propose for you. If you have finished the Abridgment of English History, and of Burnet's History of the Reformation, I recommend to you next (before any

other reading of history) Oldecastle's Remarks on the History of England, by lord Bolingbroke. Let me apprise you of one thing before you read them; and that is, that the author has bent some passages to make them invidious parallels to the times he wrote in; therefore be aware of that, and depend, in general, on finding the truest constitutional doctrines: and that the facts of history (though warped) are nowhere falsified. I also recommend Nathaniel Bacon's Historical and Political Observations*; it is, without exception, the best and most instructive book we have on matters of that kind. They are both to be read with much attention, and twice over; Oldecastle's Remarks to be studied and almost got by heart, for the inimitable beauty of the style, as well as the matter. Bacon for the matter chiefly; the style being uncouth, but the expression forcible and striking. I can write no more, and you will hardly read what is writ.

Adieu, my dear child. Your ever affectionate uncle.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

Astrop Wells, Sept. 5, 1754.

My dear nephew,
I HAVE been a long time without conversing with you, and thanking you for the pleasure of your last letter. You

* This book, though at present little known, formerly enjoyed a very high reputation. It is written with a very evident bias to the principles of the parliamentary party to which Bacon adhered; but contains a great deal of very useful and valuable matter. It was published in two parts, the 1st in 1647, the 2nd in 1651, and was secretly reprinted in 1672, and again in 1682; for which edition the publisher was indicted and outlawed. After the Revolution, a fourth edition was printed, with an advertisement, asserting, on the authority of lord chief justice Vaughan, one of Selden's executors, that the groundwork of this book was laid by that great and learned man. And it is probably on the ground of this assertion, that in the folio edition of Bacon's book, printed in 1739, it is said in the titlepage to have been "collected from some manuscript notes of John Selden, esq." But it does not appear that this notion rests on any sufficient evidence. It is, however, manifest from some expressions in the very unjust and disparaging account given of this work in Nicholson's Historical Library (part i, p. 150), that Nathaniel Bacon was generally considered as an imitator and follower of Selden.

may possibly be about to return to the seat of learning on the banks of the Cam; but I will not defer discoursing to you on literary matters, till you leave Cornwall, not doubting but you are mindful of the Muses amidst the very savage rocks and moors, and yet more savage natives, of the ancient and respectable dutchy. First, with regard to the opinion you desire concerning a common-place book; in general I much disapprove the use of it: it is chiefly intended for persons who mean to be authors, and tends to impair the memory, and to deprive you of a ready, extempore use of your reading, by accustoming the mind to discharge itself of its reading on paper, instead of relying on its natural power of retention, aided and fortified by frequent revisions of its ideas and materials. Some things must be common-placed in order to be of any use; dates, chronological order, and the like; for instance, Nathaniel Bacon ought to be extracted in the best method you can: but in general my advice to you is, not to common-place upon paper, but, as an equivalent to it, to endeavour to range and methodize in your head what you read, and by so doing frequently and habitually to fix matter in the memory. I desired you some time since to read lord Clarendon's History of the civil wars. I have lately read a much honester and more instructive book, of the same period of history; it is the History of the Parliament, by Thomas May*, esq., &c. I will send it to you as soon as you return to Cambridge. If you have not read Burnet's History of his own Times, I beg you will. I hope your father is well. My love to the girls.

Your ever affectionate.

* May, the translator of Lucan, had been much countenanced by Charles the First, but quitted the court on some personal disgust, and afterwards became secretary to the parliament. His History was published in 1647 under their authority and license, and cannot by any means be considered as an impartial work. It is, however, well worthy of being attentively read; and the contemptuous character given of it by Clarendon (*Life*, vol. i, p. 35.) is as much below its real merit as Clarendon's own History is superior to it.

LETTER X.

From the same to the same.

Pay Office, April 9, 1755.

My dear nephew,
I REJOICE extremely to hear that your father and the girls are not unentertained in their travels: in the mean time your travels through the paths of literature, arts, and sciences (a road, sometimes set with flowers, and sometimes difficult, laborious, and arduous), are not only infinitely more profitable in future, but at present, upon the whole, infinitely more delightful. My own travels at present are none of the pleasantest: I am going through a fit of the gout; with much proper pain, and what proper patience I may. *Avis au lecteur*, my sweet boy: "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Let no excesses lay the foundations of gout and the rest of Pandora's box; nor any immoralities or vicious courses sow the seeds of a too late and painful repentance. Here ends my sermon, which, I trust, you are not fine gentleman enough, or, in plain English, silly fellow enough, to laugh at. Lady Hester is much yours. Let me hear some account of your intercourse with the Muses; and believe me ever, your truly most affectionate.

LETTER XI.

From the same to the same.

Pay Office, April 15, 1755.

A THOUSAND thanks to my dear boy for a very pretty letter. I like extremely the account you give of your literary life; the reflections you make upon some West Saxon actors in the times you are reading are natural, manly, and sensible, and flow from a heart that will make you far superior to any of them. I am content you should be interrupted (provided the interruption be not long) in the course of your reading, by declaiming in defence of the thesis you have so wisely chosen to maintain. It is true indeed that the affirmative maxim, *Omne solum forti patria est*, has supported some great and good men under the persecutions of faction and party injustice, and taught them to prefer an hospitable

retreat in a foreign land, to an unnatural mother-country. Some few such may be found in ancient times: in our own country also some; such was Algernon Sidney, Ludlow, and others. But how dangerous is it to trust frail, corrupt man, with such an aphorism! What fatal casuistry is it big with! How many a villain might, and has, masked himself in the sayings of ancient illustrious exiles, while he was, in fact, dissolving all the nearest and dearest ties that hold societies together, and spurning at all laws divine and human! How easy the transition from this political to some impious ecclesiastical aphorisms! If all soils are alike to the brave and virtuous, so may all churches and modes of worship; that is, all will be equally neglected and violated. Instead of every soil being his country, he will have no one for his country; he will be the forlorn outcast of mankind. Such was the late Bolingbroke of impious memory. Let me know when your declamation is over. Pardon an observation on style: "I received yours" is vulgar and mercantile; "Your letter" is the way of writing. Inclose your letters in a cover; it is more polite.

LETTER XII.

*From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew
Thomas Pitt, Esq.*

Pay Office, May 20, 1755.

My dear nephew,

I AM extremely concerned to hear that you have been ill, especially as your account of an illness you speak of as past, implies such remains of disorder as I beg you will give all proper attention to. By the medicine your physician has ordered, I conceive he considers your case in some degree nervous. If that be so, advise with him whether a little change of air and of the scene, together with some weeks course of steel waters, might not be highly proper for you. I am to go the day after to-morrow to Sunning Hill, in Windsor Forest, where I propose to drink those waters for about a month. Lady Hester and I shall be happy in your company, if your doctor shall be of opinion that such waters may be of service to you; which, I hope, will be his opinion. Besides health recovered, the Muses shall not be quite forgot: we will ride, read, walk, and philosophize, extremely at

our ease; and you may return to Cambridge with new ardour, or at least with strength repaired, when we leave Sunning Hill. If you come, the sooner the better, on all accounts. We propose to go into Buckinghamshire in about a month. I rejoice that your declamation is over, and that you have begun, my dearest nephew, to open your mouth in public, *ingenti patriæ percussus amore*. I wish I had heard you perform: the only way I ever shall hear your praises from your own mouth. My gout prevented my so-much-intended and wished-for journey to Cambridge: and now my plan of drinking waters renders it impossible. Come, then, my dear boy, to us; and so Mahomet and the mountain meet, no matter which moves to the other. Adieu, Your ever affectionate.

LETTER XIII.

From the same to the same.

July 13, 1755.

My dear nephew,

I HAVE delayed writing to you in expectation of hearing farther from you upon the subject of your stay at college. No news is the best news; and I will hope now that all your difficulties upon that head are at an end. I represent you to myself deep in study, and drinking large draughts of intellectual nectar; a very delicious state to a mind happy enough, and elevated enough, to thirst after knowledge and true honest fame, even as the hart panteth after the water-brooks. When I name knowledge, I ever intend learning as the weapon and instrument only of manly, honourable, and virtuous action, upon the stage of the world, both in private and public life; as a gentleman, and as a member of the commonwealth, who is to answer for all he does to the laws of his country, to his own breast and conscience, and at the tribunal of honour and good fame. You, my dear boy, will not only be acquitted, but applauded and dignified at all these respectable and awful bars. So *Macte tuâ virtute!* Go on and prosper in your glorious and happy career; not forgetting to walk an hour briskly every morning and evening, to fortify the nerves. I wish to hear, in some little time, of the progress you shall have

made in the course of reading chalked out. Adieu. Your ever affectionate uncle.

Lady Hester desires her best compliments to you.

LETTER XIV.

From the same to the same.

Stowe, July 24, 1755.

My dear nephew,
I AM just leaving this place to go to Wotton; but I will not lose the post, though I have time but for one line. I am extremely happy that you can stay at your college, and pursue the prudent and glorious resolution of employing your present moments with a view to the future. May your noble and generous love of virtue pay you with the sweet rewards of a self-approving heart and an applauding country! and may I enjoy the true satisfaction of seeing your fame and happiness, and of thinking that I may have been fortunate enough to have contributed, in any small degree, to do common justice to kind Nature by a suitable education! I am no very good judge of the question concerning the books; I believe they are your own in the same sense that your wearing apparel is. I would retain them, and leave the candid and equitable Mr. * * * to plan, with the honest Mr. * * *, schemes of perpetual vexation. As to the persons just mentioned, I trust that you bear about you a mind and heart much superior to such malice; and that you are as little capable of resenting it, with any sensations but those of cool decent contempt, as you are of fearing the consequences of such low efforts. As to the caution money, I think you have done well. The case of the chambers, I conceive, you likewise apprehend rightly. Let me know in your next what these two articles require you to pay down, and how far your present cash is exhausted, and I will direct Mr. Campbell to give you credit accordingly. Believe me, my dear nephew, truly happy to be of use to you.

Your ever affectionate.

LETTER XV.

From the same to the same.

Wotton, Aug. 7, 1755.

My dear nephew,
I HAVE only time at present to let you know I am setting out for London; when I return to Sunning Hill, which I propose to do in a few days, I shall have considered the question about a letter to * * *, and will send you my thoughts upon it. As to literature, I know you are not idle, under so many and so strong motives to animate you to the ardent pursuit of improvement. For English history, read the revolutions of York and Lancaster in Pere d'Orleans, and no more of the father; the Life of Edward the Fourth, and so downwards all the life-writers of our kings, except such as you have already read. For Queen Anne's reign, the continuator of Rapin.

Farewell, my dearest nephew, for to-day. Your most affectionate uncle.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the same.

Bath, Sept. 25, 1755.

I HAVE not conversed with my dear nephew a long time: I have been much in a post-chaise, living a wandering Scythian life, and he has been more usefully employed than in reading or writing letters; travelling through the various, instructing, and entertaining road of history. I have a particular pleasure in hearing now and then a word from you in your journey, just while you are changing horses, if I may so call it, and getting from one author to another. I suppose you going through the biographers, from Edward the Fourth downwards, not intending to stop till you reach to the continuator of honest Rapin. There is a little book I never mentioned, Welwood's Memoirs; I recommend it. Davis's Ireland must not on any account be omitted: it is a great performance, a masterly work, and contains much depth and extensive knowledge in state matters, and settling of countries, in a very short compass. I have met with a scheme of chronology by Blair, shewing all contemporary historical characters through all ages: it is of great use to consult frequently, in

order to fix periods, and throw collateral light upon any particular branch you are reading. Let me know, when I have the pleasure of a letter from you, how far you are advanced in English history. You may probably not have heard authentically of governor Lyttelton's captivity and release. He is safe and well in England, after being taken and detained in France some days. Sir Richard and he met, unexpectedly enough, at Brussels, and came together to England. I propose returning to London in about a week, where I hope to find lady Hester as well as I left her. We are both much indebted for your kind and affectionate wishes. *In publica commoda peccem, si longo sermone movere* one bent on so honourable and virtuous a journey as you are.

LETTER XVII.

*From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew
Thomas Pitt, Esq.*

Pay Office, Dec. 6, 1755.

OF all the various satisfactions of mind I have felt upon some late events, none has affected me with more sensibility and delight than the reading my dear nephew's letter. The matter of it is worthy of a better age than that we live in; worthy of your own noble, untainted mind; and the manner and expression of it is such as I trust will one day make you a powerful instrument towards mending the present degeneracy. Examples are unnecessary to happy natures; and it is well for your future glory and happiness that this is the case; for to copy any now existing, might cramp genius, and check the native spirit of the piece, rather than contribute to the perfection of it. I learn from sir Richard Lyttelton that we may have the pleasure of meeting soon, as he has already, or intends to offer you a bed at his house. It is on this, as on all occasions, little necessary to preach prudence, or to intimate a wish that your studies at Cambridge might not be broken by a long interruption of them. I know the rightness of your own mind, and leave you to all the generous and animating motives you find there, for pursuing improvements in literature and useful knowledge, as much better counsellors than

Your ever most affectionate uncle.

Lady Hester desires her best compliments. The little cousin is well.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

Horae Guards, Jan. 13, 1756.

My dear nephew,

LET me thank you a thousand times for your remembering me, and giving me the pleasure of hearing that you was well, and had laid by the ideas of London and its dissipations, to resume the sober train of thoughts that gowns, square caps, quadrangles, and matin bells, naturally draw after them. I hope the air of Cambridge has brought no disorder upon you, and that you will compound with the Muses so as to dedicate some hours, not less than two, of the day to exercise. The earlier you rise, the better your nerves will bear study. When you next do me the pleasure to write to me, I beg a copy of your Elegy on your Mother's Picture; it is such admirable poetry, that I beg you to plunge deep into prose and severer studies, and not indulge your genius with verse, for the present. *Finitimus oratori poeta.* Substitute Tully and Demosthenes in the place of Homer and Virgil; and arm yourself with all the variety of manner, copiousness, and beauty of diction, nobleness and magnificence of ideas of the Roman consul; and render the powers of eloquence complete by the irresistible torrent of vehement argumentation, the close and forcible reasoning, and the depth and fortitude of mind of the Grecian statesman. This I mean at leisure intervals, and to relieve the course of those studies which you intend to make your principal object. The book relating to the empire of Germany, which I could not recollect, is Vitriarius's *Jus Publicum*, an admirable book in its kind, and esteemed of the best authority in matters much controverted. We are all well: sir Richard is upon his legs and abroad again.

Your ever affectionate uncle.

LETTER XIX.

From the same to the same.

Hayes, near Bromley, May 11, 1756.

My dear nephew's obliging letter was every way most pleasing; as I had more than begun to think it long since I had the satisfaction of hearing he was well.

As the season of humidity and relaxation is now almost over, I trust that the Muses are in no danger of nervous complaints, and that whatever pains they have to tell are out of the reach of Esculapius, and not dangerous, though epidemical to youth at this soft month,

"When lavish nature in her best attire
Clothes the gay spring, the season of desire."

To be serious, I hope my dearest nephew is perfectly free from all returns of his former complaint, and enabled by an unailing body, and an ardent elevated mind, to follow, *quo te caelestis sapientia duceret*. My holidays are now approaching, and I long to hear something of your labours, which, I doubt not, will prove in their consequences more profitable to your country a few years hence than your uncle's. Be so good to let me know what progress you have made in our historical and constitutional journey, that I may suggest to you some farther reading. Lady Hester is well, and desires her best compliments to you. I am well, but threatened with gout in my feet from a parliamentary debauch, till six in the morning, on the militia. Poor sir Richard is laid up with the gout.

Yours most affectionately.

LETTER XX.

From the same to the same.

Hayes, Oct. 7, 1756.

I THINK it very long since I heard any thing of my dear nephew's health and learned occupations at the mother of arts and sciences. Pray give me the pleasure of a letter soon, and be so good to let me know what progress is made in our plan of reading. I am now to make a request to you in behalf of a young gentleman coming to Cambridge, Mr. ***'s son. The father desires much that you and his son may make an acquaintance: as what father would not? Mr. *** is one of the best friends I have in the world; and nothing can oblige me more than that you would do all in your power to be of assistance and advantage to the young man. He has good parts, good nature, and amiable qualities. He is young, and consequently much depends on the first habits he forms, whether of application or dissipation. You see, my dear nephew, what it is already to have

made yourself *princeps juventutis*. It has its glories and its cares. You are invested with a kind of public charge, and the eyes of the world are upon you, not only for your own acquittal, but for the example and pattern to the British youth. Lady Hester is still about, but in daily expectation of the good minute. She desires her compliments to you. My sister is gone to Howberry. Believe me ever, my dear nephew,

Most affectionately yours.

LETTER XXI.

From the same to the same.

Hayes, Oct. 10, 1756.

My dear nephew,
I HAVE the pleasure to acquaint you with the glad tidings of Hayes. Lady Hester was safely delivered this morning of a son. She and the child are as well as possible, and the father in the joy of his heart. It is no small addition to my happiness to know you will kindly share it with me. A father must form wishes for his child as soon as it comes into the world, and I will make mine, That he may live to make as good use of life as one that shall be nameless is now doing at Cambridge. *Quid voveat dulci matricula majus alumno?*

Your ever affectionate.

LETTER XXII.

From the same to the same.

St. James's Square, Aug. 28, 1757.

My dear nephew,
NOTHING can give me greater pleasure than the approaching conclusion of a happy reconciliation in the family. Your letter to *** is the properest that can be imagined, and, I doubt not, will make the deepest impression on his heart. I have been in much pain for you during all this unseasonable weather, and am still apprehensive, till I have the satisfaction of hearing from you, that your course of sea bathing has been interrupted by such gusts of wind as must have rendered the sea too rough an element for a convalescent to disport in. I trust, my dearest nephew, that opening scenes of domestic comfort and family affection will confirm and augment every hour the benefits you are receiving at Brighthelmston, from external and internal medical assistances. Lady Hes-

ter and aunt Mary join with me in all good wishes for your health and happiness. The duplicate, *** mentions having addressed to me, has never come to hand. I am, with truest affection, my dearest nephew, ever yours.

LETTER XXIII.

*From the Earl of Chatham to his Nephew
Thomas Pitt, Esq.*

St. James's Square, Oct. 27, 1757.

My dear nephew,

INCLOSED is a letter from ***, which came in one to me. I heartily wish the contents may be agreeable to you.

I am far from being satisfied, my dearest nephew, with the account your last letter to my sister gives of your health. I had formed the hope of your ceasing to be an invalid before this time; but since you must submit to be one for this winter, I am comforted to find your strength is not impaired, as it used to be, by the returns of illness you sometimes feel; and I trust the good government you are under, and the fortitude and manly resignation you are possessed of, will carry you well through this trial of a young man's patience, and bring you out in spring, like gold, the better for the proof. I rejoice to hear you have a friend of great merit to be with you. My warmest wishes for your health and happiness never fail to follow you. Lady Hester desires her best compliments. Believe me, with the truest affection, ever yours.

LETTER XXIV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Mount Morris, Sept. 4, 1736.

Madam,

I HAVE been racking my brains for an excuse for my negligence in not answering your grace's agreeable letter; but I find my offence so much beyond the power of apology, that I want no less than your own good-humour to excuse it; and I think I cannot give a greater proof of my opinion of it, than by relying wholly upon it for my pardon. And now I will suppose your grace gives me a smile; and upon that I will proceed

with my letter, as supposing myself excused and forgiven. I shall give you the best account I can of the time I have spent since I wrote last to you. I was near five weeks at Tunbridge, and returned just time enough for the races at Canterbury. But in the order of things, I should first speak of Tunbridge; and I will mention the part of the company I imagine best known to your grace, viz. the duchesses of Norfolk and Richmond, lord and lady Litchfield, lord and lady Tylney and their family, lord and lady Augustus Fitzroy, and lord Stanhope and Lady Lucy, and lord and lady Peterborough, and lord Paisley, and lady Dillon, and Mr. and Mrs. Southwell; lord V—— came a little before I left the Wells. What a ridiculous thing it was to swear the peace against that animal! How timorous must her ladyship be, if he could put her in fear of her life! He danced at the ball, but with a gravity of countenance, and solemnity of gait, that shewed the dance was only in his toes, and never reached his heart. Had she prudence and good nature, though his understanding might not make them happy, they might at least be easy. Not to be miserable is all some people are capable of. There want not only virtues, but a thousand little accomplishments to make married people entirely happy. I know why they are very often not happy, but your grace knows why they are, by experience; and that is the sure way of judging. I think if there were no better representatives of the married state than the thin melancholy countenance of lord V——, the words "for better for worse," which have but a bad sound, would soon be out of use. I don't know whether it proceeds from the dulness of the weather, or the subject, but I am almost asleep, so I must change my conversation from matrimony to a ball. You know some of our Grub Street wits compared marriage to a country dance, which scheme I extremely approved; but when I read it, I thought it should have been set to the tune of "Love for ever;" but they say it never did go to that tune, nor ever would. I danced twice a week all the while I was at Tunbridge; and once extraordinary, for lord Euston came down to see lord Augustus Fitzroy, and made a ball. Lord Euston danced with the duchess of Norfolk; but her grace went home early;

and then lord Euston danced with lady Delves. We all left off about one o'clock. The day after I left the Wells I went to the races, which began on Monday, and ended on Thursday, and I came home yesterday. On Monday there was an assembly again, and on Thursday another play; and as soon as that was over, a private ball, where we had ten couple. Lord Crawford and lord Rothes were at the races. The person most noticed for singularity at Tunbridge was lord —: he is always making mathematical scratches in his pocket-book, so that one half of the people took him for a conjuror. He is much admired and commended by his acquaintance, which are few in number. I think he had three at the Wells, and I believe he did not allow them above a sentence apiece in a whole day; the rest he left lady L—— to say, who, I believe, does not acquit herself ill of the office of spokeswoman. She seems to be very goodnatured, sensible, and of a more communicative temper than his lordship. I am, madam, your grace's, &c.

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXV.

From the same to the same.

Hatch, 11, 1738.

Madam,

Your grace's very entertaining letter was sent to me at sir Wyndham Knatchbull's, where I have been about three weeks, and propose returning to Mount Morris in a few days. I am as angry as I dare be with your grace, that you did not send any account of those charming fire works, which I fancy were the prettiest things imaginable. I very much approve your love of variety in trifles, and constancy in things of greater moment. I think you have great reason to call exchange robbery, though the common saying is to the contrary. For my part, who never saw one man that I loved, I scarce imagine I could be fond of a dozen, and come to that unreasonableness so ridiculously set forth in Hippolyto in the Tempest; at present I seldom like above six or eight at a time. I fancy in matrimony one finds variety in one, in the charming vicissitudes of

"Sometimes my plague, sometimes my darling;
Kissing to day, to-morrow snarling."

Then the surprising and sudden transformation of the obsequious and obedient lover, to the graceful haughtiness and imperiousness of the commanding husband, must be so agreeable a metamorphosis as is not to be equalled in all Ovid's collection, where I do not remember a lamb's being transformed into a bear. Your grace is much to be pitied, who has never known the varieties I mention, but has found all the sincerity of friendship, and complacency of a lover, in the same person; and I am sure my lord duke is a most miserable man, who has found one person who has taken away that passion for change, which is the boast and happiness of so many people. Pray tell my lord Dupplin that I never heard of a viscount that was a prophet in my life. I assure you I am not going to tie the fast knot you mention: whenever I have any thoughts of it I shall acquaint your grace with it, and send you a description of the gentleman with his good qualities and faults in full length. At present I will tell you what sort of a man I desire, which is above ten times as good as I deserve; for gratitude is a great virtue, and I would have cause to be thankful. He should have a great deal of sense and prudence to direct and instruct me, much wit to divert me, beauty to please me, good humour to indulge me in the right, and reprove me gently when I am in the wrong; money enough to afford me more than I can want, and as much as I can wish; and constancy to like me as long as other people do, that is, till my face is wrinkled by age, or scarred by the small pox; and after that I shall expect only civility in the room of love, for as Mrs. Clive sings,

"All I hope of mortal man,
Is to love me whilst he can."

When I can meet all these things in a man above the trivial consideration of money, you may expect to hear I am going to change the easy tranquillity of mind I enjoy at present, for a prospect of happiness; for I am like Pygmalion, in love with a picture of my own drawing, but I never saw an original like it in my life; I hope when I do, I shall, as some poet says, find the statue warm.

I am, madam, your most obedient humble servant,

ELIZ. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXVI.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

— 1738.

Madam,

As your grace tenders my peace of mind, you will be glad to hear I am not so angry as I was. I own I was much moved in spirit at hearing you neglected your health; but since you have had advice, there is one safe step taken. As for me, I have swallowed the weight of an apothecary in medicine; and what I am the better, except more patient and less credulous, I know not. I have learnt to bear my infirmities, and not to trust to the skill of physicians for curing them. I endeavour to drink deep of philosophy, and to be wise when I cannot be merry, easy when I cannot be glad, content with what cannot be mended, and patient where there is no redress. The mighty can do no more, and the wise seldom do as much. You see I am in the main content with myself, though many would quarrel with such an insignificant, idle, inconsistent person; but I am resolved to make the best of all circumstances around me, that this short life may not be half lost in pains, "well remembering and applying, the necessity of dying." Between the periods of birth and burial, I would fain insert a little happiness, a little pleasure, a little peace: to-day is ours, yesterday is past, and to-morrow may never come. I wonder people can so much forget death, when all we see before us is but succession; minute succeeds to minute, season to season, summer dies as winter comes. The dial marks the change of hour, every night brings death-like sleep, and morning seems a resurrection; yet, while all changes and decays, we expect no alteration, unapt to live, unready to die, we lose the present and seek the future, ask much for what we have not, thank Providence but little for what we have; our youth has no joy, our middle age no quiet, our old age no ease, no indulgence; ceremony is the tyrant of this day, fashion of the other, business of the next. Little is allowed to freedom, happiness, and contemplation, the adoration of our Creator, the admiration of his works, and the inspection of ourselves. But why should I trouble your grace with these reflections. What my

little knowledge can suggest, you must know better: what my short experience has shewn, you must have better observed. I am sure any thing is more acceptable to you than news and compliments, so I always give your grace the present thoughts of my heart. I beg my compliments to lady Oxford, who I hope is better.

I am, madam, your grace's most obedient servant,
E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXVII.

From the same to the same.

Canterbury, Aug. 15, 1759.

Madam,

I HOPE the writing faculty will be restored again to your grace in a few days, for I never stood more in need of such a consolation. I am at present banished from home by the small pox. On Saturday a woman and three children, who live in a farm house at our gate, fell ill of it, which so much frightened my very good and tender mamma, that my papa sent my sister and myself directly to Canterbury, where we shall stay a week with Mrs. Scott, and then go to Mrs. T——, the wife of a prebend of this church. I do not much like a country town; there is little company except deans, prebends, and minor canons. We have met with a great deal of civility, and have nothing but messages and visits from prebends, deacons, and the rest of the church militant here on earth. In short, the whole town takes to me so much, that I am sure they would choose me a member of parliament, if I would offer myself as a candidate. I think I shall be tired of the study of divines, before our pestilential neighbours are well again. To my unspeakable grief, my brother Robinson will not be persuaded to avoid the danger. I heard lately that Mr. Dashwood was dead at Rome. I hope it was not miss Dashwood's brother; for an addition of fortune, which comes by the loss of a friend, is always far from welcome. I have seven brothers, and would not part with one for a kingdom; and if I had but one, I should be distracted about him; but, thanks to fortune, I am plentifully provided with them; surely no one has so many or so good brothers. Three of them intend seeing me to-morrow, and will stay here two or three days.

I have written a line to the duke; I hope the feminine hand will not hurt his reputation. I never wrote before a letter to a gentleman which was not read with spectacles; but it will be necessary for me to bespeak some younger correspondent, for fear of losing my old ones the first hard winter. I think there are some of them that could not bear a long frost. If I did not always write ill, I should make some excuse for this letter; my pen has been an ancient inhabitant of the standish; it has defaced much white paper, and been long the engine of industry and the secretary of diligence. It has given flight to as much foolishness, as when it was in the wing of a goose; but it sings its last so melodiously, one would imagine it was taken from a swan: it shall, however, ere I consign it to ignoble rest, sign myself

Your grace's very humble servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Mount Morris, Oct. 10, 1739.

Madam,

It is extremely good of your grace to continue to make me happy at a time when I can neither see you nor hear from you. I should have written upon my leaving lady Knatchbull's, but the country and the head-ach are certainly the worst correspondents, as well as the dullest companions, in the world. I have promised continually to trouble you no more, having exhausted all my epistolary matter; but I cannot help expressing my gratitude to my lord duke, who is certainly a person of indefatigable good nature. I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you in my way to Bath, and beg you will give orders to your porter to admit me: for if not, as I am grown thin since my indisposition, he will think it is my ghost and shut the door; and if you should afterwards read in your visiting book, Miss Robinson from the shades below, you will guess the meaning of it; but remember I am not going to be dipt in Lethe, but the Bath water. I shall stay but a few days in town, and then shall proceed with my father and mother to the waters of

life and recovery. My papa's chimney-corner hyp will never venture to attack him in a public place; it is the sweet companion of solitude, and the offspring of meditation; the disease of an idle imagination, not the child of hurry and diversion. I am afraid that, with the gaieties of the place, and the spirits the waters give, I shall be perfect *sal volatile*, and open my mouth and evaporate. I wish you and his grace much comfort, and lady Bell much joy upon the occasion of her marriage. I imagine she only waits for the writings. Lawyers, who live by delay, do not consider it is often the death of love. They would rather break an impatient lover's heart, than make a flaw in the writings. Then they think of the jointure, and separation of the turtles, who think they can never part from, or survive each other; at last they are convinced they loved, but the lawyer reasoned. Your grace, by experience, knows what makes matrimony happy; from observation I can tell what makes it miserable. But I can define matrimonial happiness only like wit, by negatives: 'tis not kissing, that's too sweet; 'tis not scolding, that's too sour; 'tis not raillery, that's too bitter; nor the continual shuttlecock of reply, for that's too tart. In short, I hardly know how to season it to my taste; but I would neither have it tart, nor mawkishly sweet. I should not like to live upon metheglin or verjuice; and then, for that agreeable variety of "sometimes my plague, sometimes my darling," it would be worse than any thing; for recollection would never suffer one either entirely to love them when good, or hate them when bad. I believe your grace will easily suppose I am not a little pleased at escaping the stupidity of a winter in the country. I have heard people speak with comfort of being as merry as a cricket, but for my part I do not find the joy of being cohabitant of the fire side with them. I am in very good spirits here, and should be so were I in a desert; I borrow from the future the happiness I expect; and from the past, by recollection, bring it back to the present. I can sit and live over those hours I passed so pleasantly with you when I was in town, and in hope enjoy those I may have the pleasure of passing with you again. I was a month at Hatch, where the good humour of the

family makes every thing agreeable; we had great variety in the house: children in cradles, and old women in elbow chairs. I think the family may be looked upon like the three tenses, the present, past, and future. I am very glad to hear the marquis and the little ladies are well; I beg my compliments to his grace. The hour for ghosts to rest is come, so I must vanish; I shall appear again in a white sheet of paper ere long; but what can I write from a place where I know nothing but that I am, your grace's humble servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXIX.

*From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the
Duchess of Portland.*

— 1739.

Madam,

As I always acquaint your grace with my motions from place to place, I think it incumbent upon me to let you know I died last Thursday; having that day expected to hear of a certain duchess, and being disappointed, I fell into a vexation, and from thence into a chagrin, and from that into a melancholy, with a complicated *et cetera*, and so expired, and have since crossed the Styx, though Charon was loth to receive me into the boat. Pluto inquired into the cause of my arrival; and upon telling him it, he said, *that* lady had sent many lovers there by her cruelty, but I was the first friend who was despatched by her neglect. I thought it proper to acquaint you with my misfortune; and therefore called for the pen and ink Mrs. Rowe had used to write her Letters from the Dead to the Living, and consulted with the melancholy lovers you had sent there before me, what I should say to you. One was for beginning, *Obdurate fair*; one for addressing you in metre; another in metaphor; but I found these lovers so sublime a set of ghosts, that their advice was of no service to me, so I applied to the other inhabitants of Erebus. I went to Ixion for counsel; but his head was so giddy with turning, he could not give me a steady opinion; Sisyphus was so much out of breath with walking up hill he could not make me an answer. Tantalus was so dry he

could not speak to be understood; and Prometheus had such a gnawing at his stomach he could not attend to what I said. Presently after I met Eurydice, who asked me if I could sing a tune, for Pluto had a very good ear, and I might release her for ever, for though

" Fate had fast bound her,
With Styx nine times round her,
Yet singing a tune was victorious."

I told her I had no voice, but that there was one lady Wallingford in the other world, who could sing and play like her own Orpheus, but that I hoped she would not come thither a great while. The Fatal Sisters said they had much fine thread to spin for her yet, and so madam Eurydice must wait with patience. Charon says the packet-boat is ready, and ghosts will not wait, so I must take my leave of you to my great grief; for, as Bays in the Rehearsal says, ghosts are not obliged to speak sense, I could have added a great deal more. Pluto gives his service, and Proserpine is your humble servant. We live here very elegantly; we dine upon essence, like the duke of Newcastle; we eat and drink the soul and spirit of every thing; we are all thin and well-shaped, but what most surprised me was to see sir Robert Austin*, who arrived here when I did, a perfect shadow; indeed I was not so much amazed that he had gone the way of all flesh, as to meet him in the state of all spirit. At first I took him for sir ———, his cousin; but upon hearing him say how many ton he was shrunk in circumference, I easily found him out. I shall wait patiently till our packet wafts me a letter from your grace: being now divested of passion, I can, as a ghost, stay a post or two under your neglect, though flesh and blood could not bear it. All that remains of me is your faithful shade,

E. ROBINSON.

P. S. Pray lay up my letter where it cannot hear the cock crow, or it will vanish, having died a maid. There are a great many apes who were beaux in your world, and I have a promise of three more who made a fine figure at the last birthday, but cannot outlive the winter.

Written from Pluto's palace by darkness visible.

* A very fat man.

LETTER XXX.

From the same to the same.

Bath, Jan. 7, 1740.

Madam,

THE pleasure your grace's letter gave me, convinced me that happiness can reach one at Bath, though I think it is not an inhabitant of the place. I pity your confinement with the reverend assembly you mentioned. It is very unreasonable of people to expect one should be at home, because one is in the house. Of all privileges, that of invisibility is the most valuable. Lord — was wheeled into the rooms on Thursday night, where he saluted me with much snuff and civility, in consequence of which I sneezed and courtesied abundantly. As a farther demonstration of his loving kindness, he made me play at commerce with him. You may easily guess at the charms of a place where the height of my happiness is a pair royal at commerce, and a peer of threescore. Last night I took the more youthful diversion of dancing; our beaux here may make a rent in a woman's fan, but they will never make a hole in her heart; for my part, lord N. Somerset has made me a convert from toupets and pumps to tie wigs and a gouty shoe. Ever since my lord duke reprimanded me for too tender a regard for lord Crauford's nimble legs, I have resolved to prefer the merit of the head to the agility of the heels; and I have made so great a progress in my resolution as to like the good sense which limps, better than the lively folly which dances. But to my misfortune he likes the queen of spades so much more than me, that he never looks off his cards, though, were I queen of diamonds, he would stand a fair chance for me. I hope the Bath waters are as good for the gout in the heart as the gout in the stomach, or I shall be the worse for the journey. Lord Ailesford, lady Ann Shirley, lady S. Paulet, &c. &c. are here; miss Greville, miss Berkely, and lady Hereford. Mr. Mansell came last night to the ball. We have the most diverting set of dancers, especially among the men; some hop and some halt in a very agreeable variety. The dowager duchess of Norfolk bathes; and being very tall, had nearly drowned a few women in the Cross Bath, for she ordered it to be

filled till it reached her chin, and so all those who were below her stature, as well as her rank, were forced to come out or drown; and finding it, according to the proverb, in vain to strive against the stream, they left the bath rather than swallow so large a draught of water. I am sorry for the cruel separation of your grace and Miss Dashwood; I believe no one parts with their friends with greater reluctance than you do; and how they part with you I have a melancholy remembrance. I am of your opinion, that one may easily guess at the depth of an understanding whose shallows are never covered by silence. It is now pretty late, and I will end my scandalous chronicle of Bath. I beg my best compliments to my lord duke and to lady Wallingford. I am, &c.

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXXI.

From the same to the same.

Bath, Jan. 30, 1740.

Madam,

IT is said, Expectation enhances the value of a pleasure. I think your letters want nothing to add to the satisfaction they give, and I would not have your grace take the method of delay to give a zest to your favours: however, your letter did give me the greatest pleasure; I must have been sunk in insensibility if it had not made me happy. I have long been convinced it was in your power to give me happiness, and I shall begin to think health too, for I have been much better ever since I received it. I hope the duke is entirely well of his new disorder; I am sure his grace will never have it much, for it is a distemper always accompanied by peevishness; and as he has not the smallest grain of that in his composition, he can never have a constitution troubled with the gout. What will this world come to now duchesses drink gin and frequent fairs! I am afraid your gentlemen did not pledge you, or they might have resisted the frost and fatigue by the strength of that comfortable liquor. I want much to know whether your grace got a ride in the flying coach, which is part of the diversion of a fair. I am much obliged to you for wishing me of the party; I should

have liked it extremely. When you go again, pray beware of a thaw, lest you should meet with your final dissolution. Lady Berkshire, Mrs. Greville, and her daughter, called upon me yesterday. Every body takes pity on me now I am confined so much. I am much obliged to your grace for forming schemes for me. If any castles come to my share, they must be airy ones, for I have no materials to build them on *terra firma*. I am not a good chimerical architect: and besides, I would rather dwell this summer in a small room in a certain noble mansion near Gerrard's Cross, than in the most spacious building I could have. I shall not be troublesome to you in town; for our stay here will be so long, that our family will hardly go down till the end of May. I have many things to say which can be conveyed to your knowledge by no way but through your ear. The time will come that we shall meet at Philippi. Time, though swift, seems slow while its progress is towards our wishes: if I was at the old gentleman's elbow I should shake his hour-glass to hasten the arrival of April. While I am impatient to see you, I cannot help wondering dean Swift should think it an unreasonable thing for lovers to desire the gods to annihilate both space and time to make two lovers happy. For my part, I have wished, in the more reasonable passion of friendship, the loss of three months, and at least as many counties, that we might be together. If love, like faith, could remove mountains, you would see me with you by to-morrow morning; except the humorous lieutenant, no one was ever so much in love with one of their own sex, as I am with your grace. If I should ever be half as much enamoured of one of the other, what will become of me in this world,

"Where sighs and tears are bought and sold,
And love is made but to be told?"

While Hymen holds by Mammon's charter, my affections would assuredly be slighted, having nothing but myself in the scale, and some few vanities that make me light. What is a woman without gold or fee-simple? A toy while she is young, and a trifle when she is old. Jewels of the first water are good for nothing till they are set: but as for us, who are no brilliants, we are nobody's money till we have a foil, and are en-

compassed with the precious metal. As for the intrinsic value of a woman, few know it, and nobody cares. Lord Poppington appraised all the female virtues, and bought them in under a 1000*l.* sterling; and the whole sex have agreed no one better understood the value of womankind. I admire the heroic exploits of the *beaux* at the playhouse; but could these Narcissus's break the looking-glass and destroy the images of themselves! Beating the actors off the stage exceeded the valorous enterprise of Don Quixotte when he demolished the puppets. I hear one of the gentlemen (*fortune de la guerre*) was caught in a trap, and descended, ghost-like, under the stage: I fancy he called out, Fight, fight! with as much solemnity as Hamlet's ghost cries, Swear! I think this practical wit is a little dangerous. I hope a law will be made, that no man shall be witty upon another until he fetches blood, or unfurnishes or fires a house, for the jest's sake; for really it becomes necessary to restrain the active genius of our youths; and especially it shall be ordered, that no person be witty if they cannot pay damages, and that unlawful jests, &c. &c. be forborne.— With compliments to my lord duke I take my leave. I am, madam, your grace's, &c. E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXXII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, to Miss S. Robinson.

Whitehall, 1740.

My dear sister,
I HAD your kind and affectionate letter; and I can assure you I have had no pleasure equal to what it gave me since we parted. I believe we should be too much grieved at the swift passing of hours, if we did not look upon the near stages of time as the road to some happiness. How should we regret every span of life that did not seem to stretch towards the attainment of some desire; as, in a story that delights, we hasten eagerly to the circumstances, without considering that the tale is the nearer told; and very brief is that of life; yet not to be repeated because that it is good, or that it is short, or that it is pleasant. May your little story be filled with every

particular joy, every instance of happiness, every gift of good fortune; and let it be the chief circumstance of mine that I grieved or rejoiced, and loved, and lived, and died as you did. We had company at dinner on Monday, and in the afternoon I went to lord Oxford's ball at Mary-le-bone. It was very agreeable; I will give you the list of company as they danced.—The duchess and lord Foley, the duke and Mrs. Pendarvis*, Lord Dupplin and Dash†, lord George and Fidget‡, lord Howard and miss Caesar, Mr. Granville and miss Tatton, Mr. Hay and another miss Caesar. The partners were chosen by their fans, but with a little *supercherie* in the case. I believe one of our dancers failed, so our worthy cousin, sir T——, was invited and came; but when he had drawn miss ——'s fan, he would not dance with her; but Mr. Hay, who, as the more canonical diversion, had chosen cards, danced with the poor forsaken lady. The knight bore the roast with great fortitude, and, to make amends, promises his neglected fair a ball at his house. It did not end till two in the morning. The earl and countess behaved very graciously: my lord desired his compliments to my father. Pray give him my duty, and tell him I propose doing myself the honour of writing to him very soon. I sat for my picture this morning to Zinck; I believe it will be like. I am in Anne Boleyn's dress. I had the pleasure of hearing to-day that our dear Robert had succeeded in obtaining a ship. I am sorry he will go out with the first fleet, for your sake and mine, two respects very dear to me. I tremble too, for fear he should have any engagement with the Spaniards. Mrs. Dewes desires to recommend herself to you, being of the party of loving sisters.

I hope the ill news of Vernon is not true. My duty to my mamma.

My dearest sister, I am yours most affectionately,

E. ROBINSON.

* The widow of Alex. Pendarvis, esq. of Roscrow, in Cornwall, afterwards married to Dr. Delany, the friend of Swift. See her letters in Swift's Correspondence.

† Miss Catherine Dashwood, the Delia of Hammond the poet,

‡ Herself.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Whitehall, ———.

My dear sister,

You will think me the most idly busy of any person in the world; I have got a little interval between vanity and ceremony to write to you, but must soon leave you, to dress and visit, the grand occupations of a woman's life. I was at Mrs. ——'s; we were both so courteous, complaisant, and something so like loving, it would have surprised you. What farces, what puppet-shows do we act! Some little machine behind the scene moves us, and makes the same puppet act Scrub, or strut Alexander the Great. Madam, contrary to her usual manner, acted the part of the obliging; I, as much against my former sentiments, personated the obliged. Alas! I fear the first mover in the one case was not generosity, nor in the other gratitude. She went over head and ears in promises, and I went as deep in thanks. The evening was concluded, and the farce ended, with a scene more sincere and affectionate between Morris, Robert, and myself. I have taken leave of Robert; alas! what a painful word is farewell! Lord Dunsinane came from Cambridge this morning: he says my brother Matt is better in health than he has been a great while. I am reading doctor Swift's and Mr. Pope's letters; I like them much, and find great marks of friendship, goodness, and affection, between these people, whom the world think too wise to be honest, and too witty to be affectionate. But vice is the child of folly rather than of wisdom; and for insensibility of heart, like that of the head, it belongeth unto fools. Lord Bolingbroke's letters shine much in the collection. We are reading Dr. Middleton's new edition of his Letter from Rome, with the additions; but have not yet reached the postscript to Warburton. The answer to the Roman Catholic is full, and I doubt not but the Protestant Divine will be as happily silenced. Truth will maintain its ground against all opposition. The dedication to Dr. G—— is modest enough; the doctor commends his hospitality and table, but does not tell us his friend was careful not to over-eat himself, which is

an omission. I am, my dear sister, most affectionately yours,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXXIV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Miss S. Robinson.

Whitehall, —.

Dear sister,

I PROPOSE to entertain you with some poetry, therefore you will excuse a lack of prose for this post. I am pretty well in health, but at this present instant not in high spirits; a key below impertinence and talkativeness. However the Muses, fair ladies, and Mr. Lyttleton, a fine gentleman, will entertain you more agreeably. The verses were written at lord Westmoreland's: I think they are pretty. Either I am very partial to the writer, or Mr. Lyttleton has something of an elegance in all his compositions, let the subject be ever so trifling. I believe what he says in praise of solitude and the country is to please Apollo, who, of all employments, preferred that of a shepherd. To Juno he puts up petitions of more pride and ambition; and from Minerva he has not unsuccessfully asked wisdom and the arts of policy. Happy is the genius that can drink inspiration at every stream, and gather similes with every nose-gay!

Does the world want odd people, or do we want strange cousins, that the St—nes must increase and multiply? No folly ever becomes extinct, fools do so establish posterity. Mr. S—— has a living of 100*l.* a year, with a prospect of better preferment. He was a great rake, but having been japped and married, his character is new varnished. I do not comprehend what my cousin means by their little desires; if she had said their little stomachs, it had been some help to their œconomy. But when people have not sufficient for the necessities of life, what avails it that they can do without its pomps and superfluities? Mr. B—— came up in the park to me to-day, and asked me if I would give A—— leave to beg my pardon, for that he had ordered him to do it. I desired he would tell him that he was as safe in my contempt as he could be in my forgiveness, and that I had rather not be troubled with

him. I thought the valorous captain would put him upon his penitentials; and if A——'s sword was no sharper than his satire, and his courage no greater than his wit, the challenge would not be dangerous. But he is well aware of

“the perils that environ
The man that meddles with cold iron.”

I really think this fright will give him such a terror of steel, that he will hardly endure the blade of a knife this twelve-month. I hope in his repentance he will not turn his hand to commendation; for though I am not vexed at the spattering of his abuse, I could never endure the daub of his panegyric.

The duchess has presented me with a very fine lace head and ruffles. My duty to papa and mamma. In great haste yours,
E. R.

LETTER XXXV.

From the same to the Rev. W. Freind.*

Sir,

I HAD the pleasure of your letter on Saturday, at my return from Ranelagh Gardens; I was glad to see the evening of a day spent in diversion improve into friendship. The various pleasures the general world can give us are nothing in comparison of the collected comforts of friendship. The first play round the head, but come not to the heart; the last are intensely felt: however, both these kinds of pleasures are necessary to our satisfaction. If we would be more merry than wise, we may be imprudent; but to increase the critical knowledge, that increases sorrow, is not the desire or boast, but the misfortune and complaint, of the truly wise. It is really a misfortune to be above the *bagatelle*; a scorn of trifles may make us despise grey heads, mitred heads, nay, perhaps, crowned heads; it may teach us to take a little man from his great estate, a lord-mayor from his great coach, a judge out of his long wig, a chief-justice from his chair; it may even penetrate a crowd of cour-

* Afterwards dean of Canterbury, son of Dr. Robert Freind, head master of Westminster school, and nephew of Dr. John Freind, M. D. who was committed to the Tower on account of Atterbury's conspiracy. He married miss Grace Robinson, sister of sir Thomas Robinson, and of the primate of Ireland.

tiers, till we reach the very heart of the prime minister. It is best to admire and not to understand the world. Like a riddle, by its mystery rather than by its meaning, it affords a great deal of amusement till understood, and then but a very poor and scanty satisfaction. To the farmer every ear of wheat is bread; the thrasher, by dint of labour, finds out it is half chaff; the miller, a man of still nicer inquiry, discovers that not a quarter of it will bear the sifting; the baker knows it is liable to a thousand accidents, before it can be made into bread. Thus it is in the great harvest of life; reckon that lofty stem on which greatness grows, and all that envelope it, as a part of the golden grain, and it makes a good figure; and thus sees the common eye. The nicer inquirer discerns how much of the fair appearance wants intrinsic value, and that when it is sifted there remains but little of real worth, and even that little is with difficulty moulded to good use. Do not let you and I encourage this sharpness of sight; let the vision come to us through the grossest medium, and every little object borrow bulk and colour: let all be magnified; multiplied, varied, and beautified by opinion, and the mistaken eye of prejudice: thus will the world appear a gay scene; as indulgent spectators we will call every trick a scheme, and every little wish ambition. I am mortified at your not coming to town; I hoped I should have seen you and Mrs. Freind this spring, but as that cannot be, let me hear often from you. I long to hear my little cousin is well. The dean of Exeter is no more, he died yesterday. Mr. Hay told me, upon hearing me say I should write to you to-day, that he would have me tell you, from him, that Mr. Hume is to be prebend of Westminster; Dr. Holmes to be dean of Exeter, in the room of Dr. Clark; the speaker's chaplain is made prebend of Windsor in the room of Dr. Lewis: it is said Dr. Hutton or Dr. Wiles is to have Westminster, whoever is made bishop. Mr. Hay says, if you would know any thing more he will write to you; he seems to have a great regard for you. I hear it would be much easier for you to get something new than any thing which your father has had, as it is a precedent that may open a door to solicitations from persons who have not the reason to expect that consideration

which your good, and your father's great and excellent character require: consider this, and don't be slack! I know you do not think half enough of your interest. The bell rings, else I could be so impertinent as to advise. Forgive the zeal of a sincere friend and well-wisher.

E. ROBINSON.

My kindest thoughts attend on my cousin.

LETTER XXXVI.

From the same to the Duchess of Portland.

Hayton, May 5, —.

Madam,

IN this wicked world your grace will see honest sincerity go generally worse drest than flattery. In the true affection of my heart, I am going to write a long letter upon paper ungilded and unadorned; but truth, as your friend, may visit you in a *dishabille*; and by the length of my paper, and its homeliness, I compliment you with the opinion of your having two rare virtues, patience and humility, to endure and accept such an epistle. I had the pleasure of my lord duke's letter yesterday; all the contents were agreeable, and especially your commands to write, though I am not just in the situation one would wish a correspondent. I wish you could see the furniture of my desk, which is all eaten by the worms. My pen has served the good old man for his accounts these forty years; I can hardly make it write any thing but *imprimis, item, ditto*; if I would thank your grace for the many obligations I have received, it is ready to write a receipt in full; or would I express that you have my entire affection and esteem, it is going to write, for value received; and when I would enumerate your favours, it is in haste to run to the sum total. I believe since the pen was dipped in ink it never made a compliment, or was employed to express one generous sentiment of friendship. It has been worn out in the service of gain; to note pounds, shillings, and pence, with the balance on the side of profit, has been its business. I hear the burlesque of sweet Pamela and her dear master is very droll; if it has ridiculed them as well as it has Dr. Middleton and his hero, I fancy it must be diverting; but high things are better burlesqued than low; the dedica-

tion was really admirable, and I fancy must mortify both the author and the patron. Indeed I believe my friend was the first man that ever complimented a gentleman upon not cramming till he was sick, and not lying in bed longer than he could sleep; but flattery must be at the dinner and the levee of the great. I wish lord H——y may not get the cholic with his vegetable diet; as it turns to vanity and wind, he will be too much puffed up with it. I cannot imagine, after this, how the doctor can ever dedicate a book to the duke of Newcastle, unless he says, as Pope does, that by various methods they aim at praise, and that

“ Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm ”

I believe many great men have been celebrated for their banquets, but my lord H—— has the honour of being the first who ever recommended himself to an author by his fasting. I had the pleasure yesterday of a long letter from my sister: her eyes are perfectly well, but she has not made any use of them but in writing to me; and, I must tell you, her care made her steep her letter in vinegar, for fear it should prove as fatal as Pandora's present. The caution diverted me extremely, for I thought the letter seemed as if it had been sent for a broken forehead. My mamma made me the first visit last Wednesday. If the weather was more mild I might soon hope to meet my sister, but it confines her at home. I had the satisfaction of hearing from my brother Robinson, last post, that he finds great benefit by the Bath waters; but while I was rejoicing at this good news, he informed me Mrs. Freind had just lost her little daughter by an unhappy accident. I know hers and Mr. Freind's tenderness to be such, that they will be extremely grieved at it, and the aggravation of its not being in the common order of nature will add much to the affliction. If your grace continues to exhort me to write, you must not be surprised if I entertain you with the conversation of the place I am in; you may expect a very good receipt to make cheese and syllabub, or, for your more elegant entertainment, a treatise upon the education of turkeys. I would catch you some butterflies, but I have not seen any pretty ones. I have order-

ed people upon all our coasts to seek for shells, but have not yet got any pretty ones: if Neptune knew your grace wanted some, he would send his maids of honour, the Nereides, to look for them, and Proteus would take the shape of a shell in hopes of having a place in your grotto; I intend to tell the inhabitants of the deep whom they are for, and they will all assist me; even the Leviathan will not be worse than the judge; if he eats the fish, he will give us the shell. I am sorry Mrs. Pendarvis has left you for the summer; Dash too talks of departing; when they are gone London will lose much of its charms for you, and the country is not yet delightful; even this sweet month, the fairest of the year, does not disclose its beauties. Pray make my compliments to my lord duke, and give a thousand kisses to the dear little ones, and assure them I should be glad to deliver them myself. I hope Mrs. Pendarvis had a long letter from me the beginning of this week. Farewell, my dear lady duchess; farewell is the hardest word in our language, and to you I generally speak it the last of a thousand. I am, dear madam, your most obliged servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXXVII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

May 7.

Madam,
I HAD given a letter to your grace last post, but was interrupted by company; then did I regret having left the humble and quiet habitation to which the idle and the noisy did not resort; and where I had leisure to permit me to do what I did like, and no ceremonious duty to oblige me to do that I did not; for what a mortification to leave writing to you to entertain—whom? Why, an honest boisterous sea captain, his formal wife, most wondrous civil daughter, and a very coxcombical son; the good captain is so honest and so fierce, a bad conscience and a cool courage cannot abide him; he thinks he has a good title to reprove any man that is not as honest, and to beat any man that is not as valiant as himself; he hates every vice of nature

but wrath, and every corruption of the times but tyranny; a patriot in his public character, but an absolute and angry monarch in his family; he thinks every man a fool in politics who is not angry, and a knave if he is not perverse: indeed, the captain is well in his element, and may appear gentle compared to the waves and wind, but on the happy quiet shore he seems a perfect whirlwind; he is much fitter to hold converse with the hoarse Boreas in his wintry cavern, than to join in the whispers of Zephyrus in Flora's honeymoon of May. I was afraid, as he walked in the garden, that he would fright away the larks and nightingales; and expected to see a flight of sea-gulls hovering about him: the amphibious pewet found him too much a water animal for his acquaintance, and fled with terror. I was angry to find he was envious of admiral Vernon; but considering his appetite to danger and thirst of glory, I endeavoured to excuse something of the fault: it is fine when danger becomes sport, and hardships voluptuousness. All this is brought about by the magic sound of fame. Dr. Young will tell us the same principle puts the feather in the hat of the beau, which erects the high plume in the helmet of the hero; but if so, how gentle is the enchantment of the pretty man of praise, compared to the high madness of the bold hero of renown! Very safely trips the red-heeled shoe, but most perilous is the tread of honour's boot! But *a-propos*, how do our scarlet *beaux* like this scheme of going abroad? Do the pretty creatures, who mind no other thing but the ladies and the king, like to leave the drawing-room and ridotto for camps and trenches? Should the chance of war bring a slovenly corpse betwixt the wind and their nobility, can they abide it?—Dare they behold friends dead, and enemies living? I think they will die of a panic, and save their enemies' powder. Well, they are proper gentlemen, heaven defend the nunneries! as for the garrisons, they will be safe enough. The father confessors will have more consciences to quiet, than the surgeons will have wounds to dress; I would venture a wager Flanders increases in the christenings more than in the burials of the week. I am your grace's faithful and very affectionate

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

May 13, —.

Madam,

I CANNOT express the pleasure your grace's letter gave me, after not having heard from you five weeks, nor indeed of you for the last fortnight. How can you say it is not in your power to make a return for my letters! mine can only afford you a little amusement, yours, my dear lady duchess, give me real happiness. I hope you did not receive any harm from writing; if your constitution is as naturally disposed as your mind to make a friend happy, I am sure you did not. My sister is just gone from me; our first meeting under the same roof was this morning; you will imagine we lengthened our happiness as long as the day: this evening she retired a little the sooner, to give me time to write to your grace. I have not yet been at Mount Morris; though I believe the infection may be over, I am not willing to venture myself for the sake of the house, while the inhabitants of it can come to me here with much more ease to themselves, and better security to me. My habitation indeed is humble, but it has the best blessings of humility, peace and content. I think I never spent a happier day than this, though fortune gave no pageantry to the joy. Indeed we wanted none of that pomp that people make use of to signify happiness, but were glad to enjoy it free and alone. We talked of your grace; I won't tell you what we said, for then you would say I was partial, and my friend complaisant; however, my happiest hours are rendered more joyful by the remembrance of you, and my most melancholy less dismal. I can never want inclination to write to you, but that I may not want materials I cannot answer: first, you must know those who are impertinent in London are downright dull in the country; here is neither vice nor novelty; and consider, if news and scandal are out of the question, what a drawback it is upon conversation? If I could sit, and rightly spell, of every herb that sips the dew, &c., I might indeed be a very good correspondent: but being neither merry nor wise, what can you make of me? Should I tell you of an intrigue between the Moon and Endymion,

Aurora and Cephalus, or the people of our sky, you would not thank me for my news; but except the plants of the earth, and the stars of heaven, what do I see here? My eyes, you know, are not fit for either minute speculations or distant prospects: however, I will own I am an admirer of a Narcissus, and now and then ogle the man in the moon through a glass. The first is as sweet as any beau, the second as changeable as any lover; but I know Pen, who despises all *beaux* and lovers, will afford a regard to these; therefore I imagine them worth my acquaintance. How impertinent is this interruption! Must I leave your grace for such a trivial consideration as my supper? They have sent me some chicken, but, alas! can one eat one's acquaintance! these inoffensive companions of my retirement, can I devour them! How often have I lately admired the provident care and the maternal affection of a hen, and shall I eat her hopeful son or fair daughter! Sure I should then be an unworthy member of the chicken society. I find myself reduced to a vegetable diet, not as a Pythagorean, for fear of removing the soul of a friend, but to avoid destroying the body of an acquaintance. There is not a sheep, a calf, a lamb, a goose, a hen, or a turkey in the neighbourhood, with which I am not intimately acquainted. When I shall leave my ark I don't know; would my dove bring me an olive branch, in promise of peace, I would soon do it; but I am in less haste, because here I have as much of my sister's company, or more, than I can quietly enjoy there; and a certain person seems ---- I can never describe how, nor tell why, but they look a little awful, and pish! and phoo! with a dignity age will never give me; really it is droll, and some things I have seen lately would furnish out scenes for a play; to me indeed it would be neither comedy nor tragedy; I can neither laugh at what I don't like, nor cry for what I don't deserve. I am very cautious as to my conversation, for I never pretend to think, or to know, or to hear, or to see. I am a sceptic, and doubt of all things; and as a mediator between my opinion and all positive affirmation, make use of an—*It seems to me*, and a—*Perhaps*, and—*It may be*; and then I can tack about to the right point of the compass at a short warning. The other day,

seeing Dr. Middleton's book upon the table, they discoursed the whole matter over, and set things in so new a light, that I was extremely entertained for two hours, though I had full exercise in following with my assent all that was advanced; we condemned Cicero for folly, Cato for cowardice, Brutus for subjection, Cassius for gaiety; and then we talked it all back again, and left them the very men we found them; for you must know there are persons, who, if no one will contradict them, will contradict themselves rather than not debate. I am very glad to hear those I value so much as Pen, Dash, and Don, love me; but I approve their prudence in not telling me so too often, for I am by nature prone to vanity. Indeed, as to Dash, I have been the aggressor, and I have not a good title to complain of Mrs. Pendarvis; but as to Mrs. Donnellan, she has not wrote to me this age; I hope they are all well, and desire my compliments, or, in a style which better suits the simplicity and sincerity of my manners, my love. I need not say I am always glad, and I dare not say desirous, to hear from you: let me never interrupt your pleasure, nor hurt your health; but when you have a moment in which it will be agreeable to you to write, remember, my dear lady duchess, that you can bestow it on one whom it will make happy; indeed there are many who may assert that claim, but no one is with more gratitude, esteem, affection, and constancy, yours, &c. &c. E. R.

LETTER XXXIX.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

May 30, —.

Madam,
I BELIEVE the admiral's letter did not make his wife happier than it did me, as it came to me accompanied with one from your grace. Indeed my regard for him is much increased by this letter. Before I honoured him as great, but now I love him as good; and I must tell you, that after all his account of his brave exploits, I was much pleased with his friendly compliment to honest Will Fisher. I was charmed too with his affectionate expression of love to his chil-

dren. The noise of war, and the trumpet of fame, is apt to render a man deaf to the voice of nature while he is in the pursuit of glory; but I cannot imagine that a brave man, who is least checked by the timorous counsel of self-love, should not be of all others most open to the love of his family and friends. Your grace will think perhaps, that, like Desdemona, I shall be won by some story, passing strange, of hair breadth 'scapes in the imminent and deadly breach; but really I am sensible I should make a weak rib for a hero; and, considering that while his heart throbbed with courage mine might pant with fear, I shall not aspire to a man who has more courage than suffices to head the militia and trained bands, whenever it may be necessary for his country that they should march from St. Paul's to Westminster. May he seek peace and ensue it at home and abroad. Let Minerva teach him all her peaceful arts, and Apollo instruct him in any soft accomplishments; but may the fell Bellona, and fierce Mars, never breathe the spirit of war into him! In the realm of fame I could not reign his consort, but must be left his melancholy relict. My love being become, like the nymph Echo, nothing but voice, much he would be praised, but first he must be buried; nor will an envious world utter their commendations, till the ear that merited them is deaf. Then those praises he could not hear for his reward, I should hear to my regret. I remember a story of a disconsolate widow, whose rank did not set her above truth, following her husband's corpse with many lamentations, but the most bitter was, Oh! where shall such another be gotten!—Now this irreparable circumstance makes me tremble for Mrs. Vernon, for there is none such, no not one, should the admiral be slain. Now for the *beaux*, the same tailor makes another as good at a reasonable rate, and without loss of time; he makes a buckram man as fast as Falstaff; it is but change of raiment, when the coat is the merit of the man; nor does one expect the beau, who is but a suit of satin, to last like the hero, who is a coat of mail. I am very glad of what your grace tells me of the lawsuit. I hope Mr. Harley has got his book again. I am very sorry for the duchess of Leeds' misfortune; if a fright would have made her mis-

carry, I don't know but her grace might have suffered by the capers of a certain miss Hoyden of our acquaintance. As for my eyes, which you obligingly inquire after, I cannot say, in the common phrase, that they are at your service, for really they are not under my command; I follow your grace's advice, I do not work at all, and I read by my sister's eyes. I thought I had told you a fortnight ago (but I see by the direction of your letter I have not), that I had left Mr. Smith's, and was come to a room my mamma had furnished for me, in a farm at the bottom of our gates, where she could more conveniently visit me than at a greater distance; and she thought I should grow less afraid of the house, by being near it. I was glad to come here, for I knew I should have every thing I wanted from Mount Morris, and I had a room for a maid, and all was neat and clean, and I could be as much alone as I pleased; and to tell you the truth, I believe that circumstance has helped to make my eyes bad, for before I had seen my sister I was alone all the evenings, and I used to read more than was prudent; now I do nothing at all, and take great care of myself, I should grieve to be forced to see with other people's eyes, but that I reflect it is what the first man in every kingdom does; and what the powerful choose, the weak may well submit to. I have dined at Mount Morris these two days, but they will not let me go up stairs yet; this affords me the comfort of seeing other people are more fearful for me than I am for myself, though I acquit myself of the duty of caution most rigidly. I believe your grace never saw so humble a dwelling as mine; it is high enough for Content, which is of middling stature, but high Ambition would break its head in the entrance. If I was poetically inclined I should write a pastoral, but the Muses do not haunt these shades; the poet's laurel and the lover's willow grow not in our groves; honest oak for timber, and underwood for firing, with conveniences for life, are produced, but no ornaments for story. I would describe my habitation if I had time, but it is late, and my eyes insist upon punctuality. I am greatly diverted with your account of the ancient coquette and antiquated fop. Could not she find out in sixty years

what David wisely said in his haste? May we all better improve our leisure. Oh, should I at the fatal hour, when all bloom but that of my topknot has left me, endeavour to charm, pray, my dear lady duchess, give me a hint, that there is an innocent period in which a woman is not young or old enough to bewitch; those remonstrances wisdom and you will preach like; but I see the cherry-coloured tabby and love hood are by the Destinies laid up in the India cabinet for me. I am very glad the duke is better in health, and beg your grace would tell him so. I am Mr. Achard's very humble servant: how humble and how civil does the apprehension of age make one! All this is jest. I am resolved to remain always what I am in the unalterable particular of being your grace's faithful, grateful, and affectionate

FIDGET.

My best wishes attend the dear, dear little ones: you say the marquis is naughty to mortify me; if he was always in the same humour, one should think he had no fancy; allow some whims for his age and sex. It is very good in your grace and lady Andover to think of me.

LETTER XL.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Mount Morris, June 25, 1741.

Madam,

I HOPE I shall now be able to write to your grace with more ease than I have done lately: the last time I wrote to you I was ill, and my eyes were very painful; but now I am happy in the recovery of my eyes, and have no pain or uneasiness but in my heart, which aches for my dearest friend. It owes you so many days of joy and satisfaction, it cannot repine at paying you those sympathizing hours of anguish, which any misfortune that touches you can require. It will be great joy to me to hear you keep your health, and in some degree recover your tranquillity of mind; indeed the best sentiments of nature require you should grieve; but, at the same time, all precedents and examples of fortune demand that you should again be comforted.

The law of nature is indispensable, the commands of necessity unavoidable. A comparison is the measure by which we judge. Look on the misfortunes of others: the present public calamity will afford many examples of unhappiness. How many mothers have here lost the only support of their age, and comforts of their life; and by the very messenger whom they hoped to have heard their sons were honoured and advanced by victory and triumph, they learned they were conquered and murdered, a sacrifice to their country!—even thinks their death a fault; and censure speaks so loudly of the action, the gentle voice of pity does not plead for them; this is indeed a death of horrors, when the aid of reflection, the comfort and assistance of friends, and the interposition of repentance and prayers is far off; when religion and hope do not encourage, but terror and dismay are on every side, with haste and confusion, sad convoy to eternity! Is there (for, my dear duchess, you know the tenderest affections of the nearest relation) so sad a case as that of a parent that loses the promise of many years, the flattering hope of a life of care—their only child? Think, too, how many wives this fatal expedition may have robbed of the happiness and the very support of their beings; having now lost their maintenance and friend together, they are left with their children to all the temptations of want and mean insinuations of poverty. If they can withstand these, how many enemies have they still left to cope with! The outrages of the powerful, the insolence of the rich, scorn of the proud, and malice of the uncharitable, all beating against the broken spirit of the unfortunate. Many unhappy sisters must now be deprived of the friend and guardian of their youth, orphans and unfriended before, with only this relation to support them in a world dangerous and malicious to youth; here they were promised the sincerest friendship under the tenderest name, and perhaps hopeful and ambitious for this their dearest object, have persuaded their brother to this life of hazard, and are now left for ever to repent that which they can never redress. How hard is it to avoid misfortunes for those to whom idleness is improper! Where does ambition, or indeed reasonable industry, call, that consci-

ence, honour, or safety, is not sometimes hazarded? This world has much of grief; through life we feel it, and in death we give it, to those whom to defend from it we would have lived or died as best were for their interest. But let us, as far as we can, shorten our sorrow and lengthen our joys; it is our duty to do so; our journey is but short, it is well to be guided in it by patience and accompanied by hope, and it will seem easier; long it can't appear: "We are such stuff as dreams are made of; our little life is bounded by a sleep." I must bid your grace adieu much sooner than I would choose, but lord Rockingham is just arrived, and dinner will be upon table in a moment. If I can keep my eyes in a seeing condition, you shall hear from me constantly. Lady Oxford, I hope, is not entirely cast down. I am, dear madam, your grace's most obedient, most obliged, faithful, and affectionate servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XLI.

From the same to the same.

July 5, 1741.

Madam,

Forty lines could not contain the thanks due for the four I received from your grace: I am much obliged to you for not delaying a moment to make me happy by your good news*; I wish you all joy upon it, and to the most noble and excellent duke also: I was in fine spirits all the rest of the day, and my pace and motion was so quick, that had I been in any room with china or brittle ware, I might have proved very detrimental to it; but as it was, I did only some slight damage to my wearing apparel: for jumping into my brother's study to give him part of my joy, I rent my garment in such a manner, that if I had not carried a joyful countenance, he would have imagined I had done it upon ill news, according to the old custom; indeed, I made a fine confusion in his room; Seneca, Socrates, and Plato, were never in their lives so discomposed with joy; but all degrees of learning, from the mighty folio to the little pocket vo-

lume, were put into disorder; the light pamphlets fluttered about, and in short it was long ere peace and silence regained their power in this their empire of wisdom. It is not usual to have such sudden occasions of joy in the country: if we are a little brisker than what is called very dull, it is sufficient; mirth here is reckoned madness, gaiety is idleness, and wit a crying sin. The parson preaches to its annoy, and much in its contempt; the justice magisterially condemns it, the young squire (like a true Briton) hates it as foreign; but indifference is so easy, and dulness so safe, every one recommends the method; they lend their precept and example too to help it forward; who hates the dull, or who envies them? who can or who would disturb them? but for the witty, they carry such a dangerous spleen they are not to be suffered in a civil society. Among many reasons for being stupid it may be urged, it is being like other people, and living like one's neighbours, and indeed without it, it may be difficult to love some neighbours as oneself: you seeing the necessity of being dull, you won't, I hope, take it amiss that you find me so, but consider I am involved in mists from the sea, and that the temperament of the air and the manners of the place contribute to my heaviness. It provokes me to hear people that live in a fog talk of the smoke of London, and that they cannot breathe there: a proper reason for them to stay away, who were made for nothing but to breathe. But people in town have other signs of life. But to the good folks that talk in that manner, nothing is an obstruction of life but an asthma! Oh, may their lungs never be troubled with a phthisic, since they think wheezing the only misfortune! Poor Alma with them resides in a pair of bellows, and has nothing to do but to puff. We have a gentleman in our neighbourhood, who, not content with his own natural dulness (though, without partiality, no man has more), has purchased ten thousand volumes at two-pence a volume. Now except the deep-learned and right reverend Dr. —, I do not believe any one ever grew learned from such a study of their fathers; yet I cannot but imagine my neighbour bought this collection for the instruction of his sons; for not being young, he can never hope to read half

* The success of the duke in his important lawsuit.

these books, and they are not sumptuous enough in their appearance to give any suspicion of vanity in him: but see the perverse turn of human things! as the bishop abovementioned did from the bottom of the mince-pie collect books, I fear these young men will from their books make a mince-pie. It is a great mortification to me that I do not visit this family, for they are certainly the most extraordinary personages in the county; the father was, till this parliament, a senator, a man of few words, but less meaning, when in the House, on common occasions very prating and impertinent; yet he has sold his voice, empty as it is, at such low gains as he could get. His wife, an awkward woman, he has always kept in the country to nurse seven or eight daughters, after his own manner, and the success has answered the design; he has taught them that all finery lies in a pair of red-heeled shoes; and as for diversion (or as I suppose they call it, fun), there is nothing like blindman's buff. Thus dressed, and thus accomplished, he brought them to our races, and carried them to the ball, where, poor girls, they expected to be pure merry, and to play at puss in the corner, and hunt the whistle; but seeing there was nothing but footing, which they had never been suffered to do in their shoes, and right hand and left, which their father thought too much for women to know, they fell asleep, as they had often been used to do, without their supper. The sons, for fear they should die, are not to be taught how to live; they are kept at home, because one boy of theirs died at school: see the advantage we have in living so far from the great city! You have no such good folks in Buckinghamshire: there your grace saw a fine importation of S——'s; they had not one article of behaviour so untaught as to appear natural; these have not one manner that seems acquired by art: the two families would make a fine contrast; pray do but figure the mademoiselles Catherinas advancing in state to meet these jumping Joans; to be sure, seeing madame courtesy so low, they would think she meant to play at leap-frog, and would jump over her head before she got to the extreme sink of her courtesy. But you will say, what are these people to you? because you keep the very medium of

politeness, must you be troubled with those that are in the bad extremes of behaviour! Why, really I believe you can have no notion of such awkwardness as this, who have only kept the best company. I must tell you, madam, you can know but a little of the world by keeping company with such people as Pen and Dash; they are quite in a different style from the rest of the world; indeed, when your humility stoops to one Fidget, you may know what is meant by the word awkwardness; but if she has the honour of living with you, she will be very apt to alter; for I think she is of a nature flexible to example: and if she does but imitate, in any degree, as she admires, she will endeavour to appear, what it is her ambition to be thought, entirely yours,

ELIZ. ROBINSON.

P. S. I beg your grace to present my compliments to my lord duke, and Mr. Achard, and some kisses to the little angels.

LETTER XLII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Freind.

Bullstrove, Tuesday 24th, 1741.

Two so united in my thoughts shall not be separated in my words; so, my good cousins, accept my salutations from the country. I took leave of our smoky metropolis on Monday morning, and changed the scene for one better suited to the season. The agreeable freedom I live in, and the rural beauties of the place, would persuade me I was in the plains of Arcadia; but the magnificence of the building, under whose gilded roofs I dwell, have a pomp far beyond pastoral. In one thing I fall short of Chloe and Phillis, I have no *Pastor fido*, no languishing Corydon to sigh with the zephyrs, and complain to the murmuring brooks; but those things are unnecessary to a heart taken up, and sufficiently softened by friendship. Here I know Mrs. Freind and you shake your heads, and think a little *bergerie* a proper amusement for the country; but, in my opinion, friendship is preferable to love. The presence of a friend is delightful, their absence supportable; delicacy without jealousy, and tenderness

without weakness, transports without madness, and pleasure without satiety. No fear that caprice should destroy what reason established; but even time, which perfects friendship, destroys love. I may now say this to you, who, from constant lovers, are become faithful friends. I congratulate your change; to have passed from hope to security, and from admiration to esteem. If you knew the charming friend I am with, you would not wonder at my encomiums upon friendship, which she makes one taste in its greatest perfection. I have greater pleasure in walking in these fine gardens because they are hers; and indeed the place is very delightful. I am sorry to think I have lost so much sunshine in town. Society and coal fires are very proper for frost; but solitude and green trees for summer. Then the *care selve beate* come in season, and Philomel sings sweeter than Farinelli. The beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, are better company than the *beau monde*; and a butterfly and a magpye, in my opinion, are at all times better company than a fop or a coxcomb. It is the necessity of the one to be gaudy, and of the other to chatter; but where folly and foppery are by choice, my contempt must attend the absurdity. I like an owl, very often, better than an alderman; a spaniel better than a courtier; and a hound is more sagacious than a fox-hunter; for a fox-hunter is only the follower of another creature's instinct, and is but a second instrument in the important affair of killing a fox. I could say a great deal more of them, if supper was not ready; so leaving you to balance their merits, and determine their sagacity, I must take my leave, only desiring my compliments to Mrs. Freind and the Doctor; if, at his years and wisdom, things so trifling as women and compliments can take any place in his remembrance. Pray let me hear from the writing half very soon; the husband is always allowed to be the head, and I think in your family he is the hand too. A letter directed to Bullstrode, by Gerrard's bag, will find and rejoice your most faithful friend and affectionate cousin,

ELIZ. ROBINSON*.

LETTER XLIII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Miss S. Robinson.

Bullstrode.

My dear sister,
I was ashamed, sorry, disappointed, and a hundred other things, that the remiss and lazy deserve to be, that I could not write to you last post. My inclination to write to you is well known; so that I need not assure you the omission was not by choice. The truth was, my eyes not being well, I was reduced to have a blister on my back. Well may it bend to such a weight of calamity! The punishments of sinful mortals generally fall on the rear. The ill-bred man is kicked, the pilfering soldier, the transgressing nymph, the idle vagabond, all receive lashes on the back. We are now a small family in comparison of our usual number. The duke, Mrs. Pendarvis, lord George, and Mr. Green, are all gone to town, the gentlemen for the birth-day, and do not return till Sunday. We are now quite a little party, but as cheerful as if we had a whole world to laugh with. Indeed we have it to laugh at, which is a safer amusement. Your description of the ball and supper is excellent. It was all *à la daube*. I am glad you went away before the scene of the shambles was opened. To be sure, our friend thought he was making a carrion entertainment for my lord Thanet's hounds. Thomas Diafoirus, who asked his mistress to see a dissection, did not offer a more absurd entertainment than this feast of mangled limbs. The duchess of Kent and Dr. Young, have long left us. You would like Dr. Young; he has nothing of the gall of satire in his conversation, but many pretty thoughts, and a particular regard for women when they are good. I have laid aside the Arcadia till Mrs. Pendarvis comes, who is fond of it, and the duchess and I have agreed that she shall read it to us. I have been quite tired of the hero ever since I caught him napping. I believe I mentioned the famous mask of Alfred to you in my last; it is now published. In the first scene I stumbled into a gulphy pool,

* This letter properly belongs to a former year, and to some previous visit to Bullstrode; but having no other date than Tuesday, 24th,

the year cannot be ascertained. The date 1741, is added to recal to the reader the progress of the series.

and a trembling quagmire; it is a sublime piece of nonsense, with very few good things in it. I have not read it all, but I have made no impatient inquiries after it. I think the plot seems not unlike Gustavus Vasa, a hero in distress, whose *je ne sçai quoi* heroical fashion, in taking a walk, or sitting down on a bank, betray an air of majesty, that you know may be a compliment to our countrymen, to shew how sagacious they are; or that, like lions, they can smell the blood royal; but no instinct of that sort, except sir John Falstaff's, has ever pleased me. When I am pretty well, I go into a tub of cold water. My dreams are not like those of the Persian monarch in the Spectator, or I would send you them. By a violent hurry in my head I find I am not in my element, but ever desire to resemble lord G——, who complains of being a goose out of water.

I am, my dear sister, yours most affectionately,
E. ROBINSON.

LETTER XLIV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Mr. Donnellan.

Bullstrode, Jan 1, 1742.

Dear Mrs. Donnellan,

THOUGH there is no day of the year in which one does not wish all happiness to one's friends, this is the day in which the heart goes forth in particular vows and wishes for the welfare of those it loves. It is the birth of a new year, whose entrance we would salute, and hope auspicious: nor is this particular mark of time of little use; it teaches us to number our days, which a wise man thought an incitement to the well spending them; and indeed, did we consider how much the pleasure and profit of our lives depends upon an œconomy of our time, we should not waste it, as we do, in idle repentance or reflection on the past, or a vain unuseful regard for the future. In our youth we defer being prudent till we are old, and look forward to a promise of wisdom as the portion of latter years: when we are old we seek not to improve, and scarce employ ourselves; looking backward to our youth, as to the day of our diligence, and take a pride in laziness, saying we rest as after the accomplishment of our undertak-

ings; but we ought to ask for our daily merit as for our daily bread. The mind no more than the body can be sustained by the food taken yesterday, or promised for to-morrow. Every day ought to be considered as a period apart: some virtue should be exercised, some knowledge improved, and the value of happiness well understood; some pleasure comprehended in it; some duty to ourselves or others must be infringed, if any of these things are neglected. Many look upon the present day as only the day before to-morrow, and wear it out with a weary impatience of its length. I pity these people, who are ever in pursuit, but never in possession; and I think their happiness must arrive as we date our promises to children, when two to-morrows come together. We are taught that there is a prudence in neglecting the present time for the future, when, alas! our fate deceives us, and we labour for others; for, as says our poet,

“He that to future times extends his cares,
Deals in other men's affairs.”

We ought so to enjoy the present as not to hurt the future. I would wish myself as little anxious as possible about the future, for the event of things generally mocks our foresight, and eludes our care, and shows us that vain is the labour of anxiety. The man was laughed at as a blunderer, who said in a public business, “We do much for posterity, I would fain see them do something for us.” I have no notion of doing every thing for the future, while it does nothing for us. Shall I give fate to-day without knowing whether it will pay me with to-morrow? The adventurers for hope are bankrupts of content: may the sun every day this year, when it rises, find you well with yourself, and at its setting leave you happy with your friends. Let it be rather the felicity of ease and pleasure than the extasy of mirth and joy! May your mind repose in virtue and truth, and never in indolence or negligence! That you already know much, is the best incitement to know more; if you study trifles, you neglect two of the best things in the world, knowledge and your own understanding. I wish we were as much afraid of unbending the mind as we are of relaxing our nerves; I should as soon be afraid of stretching a glove till it was too strait, as of making the understanding

and capacity narrow by extending it to things of a large comprehension; yet this is a common notion. I beg of you to reserve Monday morning for me, and I will spend it all with you. On Tuesday I set out for Mount Morris, and on Sunday night Pen desires you to be at her house. I hope to return to you in the beginning of March, for between two and three months; I wish we may contrive to be much together then, and will do my part towards it; I am the easier in this parting, as the meeting again is so near at hand. Our happy society is just breaking up, but I will think of it with gratitude, and not with regret, and thank Fate for the joyful hours she lent me, without blaming her for putting a stop to them. Hers is the distaff that spins the golden thread as well as the scissars that cut it. This year does not promise me such pleasure as the last has afforded me here, but the fairest gifts of fate come often unexpected. I hope this year will be happy to me, the last was much encumbered with fears and anxiety, and I had not much health in it, yet I was concerned at taking leave of it yesterday; I had not for it the tenderness one feels for a friend, or the gratitude one has to a benefactor; but I was reconciled to it as to an old acquaintance: it had not enriched nor (I fear) improved me; but it suffered me, and admitted my friends: I am sorry too when I am made to compute that I am tending towards a season of less gaiety, for there are few things worth being serious about. Follies, that are our diversion when we are young, are apt to be our trouble when we grow more prudent; a fool too, which now we laugh at, we shall then detest; and those vices we meet abroad, that now in a pride of virtue we despise, we shall from observation of their ill effects sadly fear and hate; our disposition will be changed from seeing to feeling vice and folly, from being spectators we shall become sufferers. You ask me how the desire of talking is to be cured? I don't know the recipe, and you don't want it. The duchess thanks you for your letter, and will answer it by word of mouth. I am sorry you have been low spirited, but I can never like you the less for it. Mutual friendships are built on mutual wants; were you perfectly happy, you would not want me: but there is no being but the

One perfect who is alone and without companion and equal. Imperfection wants and seeks assistance.

I am, dear madam, &c.

ELIZ. ROBINSON.

LETTER XLV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Miss S. Robinson.

Bullstrode, 1741-2.

My dear sister,

THIS day did not begin with the auspicious appearance of a letter from you. I am glad it is not the first day of the year, for I might have been superstitious upon it. I wish it may be our lot to find in the next year what we wanted in the last. But, alas! time steals the most precious pleasures from us; our life is like a road, where every show that has passed leaves but a track, that makes remembrance and reflection rugged. Where gay pleasures have swiftly passed, unsightly marks remain, and observation is much longer displeased than ever it was delighted. I am loth to part with an old year as with an old acquaintance; not that I have to it the gratitude one feels to a benefactor, or the affection one bears to a friend. I have one particular obligation to this year, as it has insured you from the danger of the small-pox, which, with a violent hand, takes at once what time steals more gently. This year, too, has allowed us many happy months together; I hope the rest will do the same, else they will come unwelcome, and depart unregretted. I pity miss Anstey for the loss of her agreeable cousin and incomparable lover. For my part, I would rather have a merry sinner for a lover than so serious a saint. I wish he had left her a good legacy. I must tell you the duchess drinks your health in particular every other day: lady Oxford dines with her one day, and I the other. You will be acquainted with her grace next winter, and Mrs. Pendarvis, and the rest of her friends, whose company you will like very well. Mrs. Donnellan tells me she has a closet in Mr. Perceval's new house, which is to hold none but friends, and friends' friends. I fancy you will not dislike the society. Adieu, my dearest sister; if I could dream of you it would

induce me to keep my bed for a week together, so I think it is better that I do not. I am, &c. &c.

E. ROBINSON.

P. S. This day se'nnight I shall be with you, and the good family at Horton, telling a winter's tale by the fire-side. Oh! that we were all to meet there that once graced that fire-side, even the goodly nine, thanking my father and mother for all the life they imparted to us, and have since supported! I hope the flock is safe, and our meeting reserved for some of the golden days of fate. I wish you all a happy new year, that shall bring you much pleasure, and leave no repentance behind. May it increase your knowledge, without giving ye sighs of experience!

LETTER XLVI.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Mount Morris, Jan. 15, 1741-2.

Madam,

IN your reasons for writing to me there was both judgment and mercy. For all the good things you do, no heart does better thank you than mine; and, let me tell your grace, there is nothing belongs to me so good as my heart. As for being the guest of my head, and the chief image of my fancy, 'tis true you are so, but the place and the company there are unworthy of you; enthroned in my brain sits many a prejudice triumphant, much space entirely void, a desolate waste: some corners stuffed with lumber, and littered with unsorted matter; things by haste misshapen, by idle memory deformed, by ignorance darkened, or by error and folly strangely disguised; reason deposed by will, judgment manacled in the bonds of prejudice, reflection busied about trifles, fancy running wild, observation looking through false colours, and confounding and mistaking objects, discretion sitting idle, because reason's comparative rule and balance are taken from her, and whim is doing all the business, while chance is sending her on a fool's errand. But my heart, I can boast, is fitter for your reception; it is filled with fair affections, love and gratitude wait on you, esteem holds you fast, regard will never part with you,

tenderness watches you, fidelity, and every honest power, is ready to serve you, the passions are all under the gentle sway of friendship. Many guests my heart has not admitted, such as are there do it honour, and a long and intimate acquaintance has preceded their admittance; they were invited in by its best virtues, they passed through the examination of severity, nay even answered some questions of suspicion that inquired of their constancy, and sincerity, but now they are delivered over to the keeping of constant faith and love; for doubt never visits the friend entered, but only examines such as would come in, lest the way should be too common. There are many ways into my heart, and but one out, which is to be forced but by outrageous injury, or breach of trust reposed. I am obliged to your grace for your wishes of fair weather; sunshine gilds every object, but, alas! January is but cloudy weather. How few seasons boast many days of calm! April, which is the blooming youth of the year, is as famous for hasty showers as for gentle sunshine; May, June, and July, have too much heat and violence; the autumn withers the summer's gaiety; and in the winter the hopeful blossoms of spring and fair fruits of summer are decayed, and storms and clouds arise; nature is out of humour at her loss, bewails her youth and strength worn out, and fairest seasons past: thus is it, too, with us. In our youth gentle expectation, and kind hope, like soft zephyrs, fan our minds, but fear often waters our tender wishes with sad tears; in the maturer seasons of life passions grow strong and violent, though more constant; in the decline appears melancholy decay; softness and strength gone off, while dismal age brings despair of amendment, and makes the pleasure of youth and profit of the riper age forgotten; unpleasant, unprofitable, uncomfortable, dark and dreary in itself, an enemy to every thing in nature, churlish and unkind, it casts no benevolent beams, but blows rude and biting blasts. Happy and worthy are those few, whose youth is not impetuous nor their age sullen; they indeed should be esteemed, and their happy influence courted. I am glad to see lord George's frank upon the letter, a person must have a good deal of power to make any thing pass but by the road

of gain in our world ; I am much obliged to his lordship for exhorting your grace to write to me, and desire my thanks on that head, with congratulations on his new dignity ; may he grow in grace and wig daily, and an honourable and reverend cravat shall not be wanting. I have been very well since I came here, my face has acquired no new faults ; it has seen too many days to expect to be mended by them, and were beauty immortal, frail vanity would not be so ; and the first, without the latter, would not delight. I am glad, however, my face has not swelled with the frost ; for I am so uneasy under objects of terror, that I would by no means be frightful, out of compassion to my friends : my countenance has never wounded any man, and Heaven forbid it should make a lady miscarry ! My sister and I are going out for air and exercise ; how poor mortals labour to be healthy and happy ! but health and happiness are fugitive things. I shall send my brother word he may have the books when Mr. Carter's executors want them. Poor Morris is in deep affliction, and indeed his friend deserved his utmost concern : he was with him in his last agonies ; a grief his tender nature could hardly support. I believe though Mr. Carter was not of a gay disposition he was happy. If sense and virtue could make a person happy, he was so ; and if it cannot, what is this world ? Virtue is all that is within our power, other circumstances of felicity are given alike to all ; sure, therefore, equitable Heaven knows that virtue alone outweighs them all :

" If there's a power above us, as that there is
All nature cries aloud, he must delight in
goodness,
And that which he delights in must be happy."

My brother is very unfortunate to have the first year of his life thus darkened by misfortune ; he has health and a cheerful nature to carry him through, but my heart bleeds for him. I am provoked and grieved in spirit, to hear some people wonder at his taking the trouble to go up to town to take care of a person who was not related to him, and they express great surprise at his being afflicted : I assure you it is the sentiment of the great city of Canterbury, though many there would have gone twice as far to have saved a vole at qua-

drille. My brother Robinson was in town but a few hours, and meeting with the ill news of a friend's death, and finding his brother in affliction, I imagine he was scarce able to wait upon your grace, nor do I suppose he had any dress unpacked that was proper to make his appearance in at Whitehall. I am glad you go into public places so as to keep yourself diverted : dissipation is the best thing for the health and spirits ; and I am at present too ready to judge this world does not deserve our collected thoughts ; there is so much misery and disappointment, it is not well to reflect and examine too deeply. The scenes of the world are gay, and the show delights our imagination, but the drama will hardly bear the criticisms of reason ; fools and knaves are the principal actors, and many a villainous plot and sad catastrophe one beholds upon the stage of life ; it is best to look on with an equal mind :

" Hurt, can we laugh ; and honest, need we cry ?"

It is wisest to neglect all follies, and forgive all vices but our own. I hear Dr. Clarke is going to be made a bishop, and I hope the news is true, for, with reverence be it spoken, I am of opinion even the venerable bench wants a supply of charity and wit, and in both he abounds ; may his spirit animate the clay (and dough) of some of his mitred brethren, with whose mitres are entwined the nodding poppy rather than the laurels that adorn the learned head. I have wrote your grace an unreasonably long letter, but I cannot release you till I have desired my compliments to my lord duke and Mr. Achard ; a thousand kisses to the little angels ; twenty of which are to the marquis's chin, and twenty more to the silver curls in lady Margaret's neck. To Mrs. Donnellan, Mrs. Pendarvis, Dash, and Mrs. Dewes, my kind remembrance ; to all that remember me my friendly recollection ; to such as forget me my hearty forgiveness and entire oblivion ; so being in affection with my friends, and charity with my enemies, and easy indifference about the bulk of the world, I will look after my future provision. I am now going to read Dr. Gastrel's book. If Mrs. Pen does not send me the *World* she promised me, I will weep in the style of

Alexander the Great, not indeed as that madman did, for a world to quarrel with, but for one to agree with. I want the kingdom of the just, such a long and pacific reign would suit me mightily, but this rapid world I like not much. Time, and the wheel of fortune, run too fast for my speed; but in a thousand years I should have leisure for every thing. My brother Tom is reading to me, my sister is pulling me by the sleeve, all are favouring my meditations. I like your account of lord S——; your grace has as complaisant a way of calling a person dull as ever I knew; I dare say his lordship did not stare at you. All your obliged humble servants here beg their compliments, my sister in particular. I am, madam, your grace's most obedient, most obliged, and ever grateful,

E. ROBINSON.

P. S. The direction Mrs. Pendarvis is to have for the book is, To be left for me at Mrs. Pembroke's, grocer, without St. George's gate, Canterbury. I have been blooded according to Dr. Mead's order; I am sure he takes me for a termagant, and is desirous of bringing my spirit under; but great souls are invincible, and you see by my affections and aversions he has not reduced me to apathy; if he should, he would be a loser by it, for I have him in high regard and esteem.

LETTER XLVII.

*From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Rev. Dr. Shaw, F. R. S., &c. &c.**

Rev. sir,

You will perhaps think me rather too hasty in my congratulations if I wish you joy of being going to be married, whereas it is generally usual to stay till people really are so before we offer to make our compliments. But joy is a very transitory thing; therefore I am willing to seize on the first occasion; and as I imagine you are glad you are going to be married, I wish you joy of that gladness; for whether you will be glad after you are married is more than mortal wight can determine; and having prepared myself to rejoice with you, I should be loth

to defer writing till, perhaps, you were become sorrowful; I must therefore in prudence prevent your espousals. I would not have you imagine I shall treat matrimony in a ludicrous manner; it is impossible for a man, who, alas! has had two wives, to look upon it as a jest, or think it a light thing; indeed it has several advantages over a single life. You, that have made many voyages, know that a tempest is better than a dead calm; and matrimony teaches many excellent lessons, particularly patience and submission, and brings with it all the advantages of reproof, and the great profit of remonstrances. These indeed are only temporal benefits; but besides, any wife will save you from purgatory, and a diligent one will secure heaven to you. If you would atone for your sins, and do a work meet for repentance, *marry*. Some people wonder how Cupid has been able to wound a person of your prowess; you, who wept not with the crocodile, listened not to the Sirens, stared the basilisk in the face, whistled to the rattlesnake, went to the masquerade with Proteus, danced the hays with Scylla and Charybdis, taught the dog of the Nile to fetch and carry, walked cheek-by-jowl with a lion, made an intimacy with a tiger, wrestled with a bear, and, in short, have lived like an owl in the desert, or a pelican in the wilderness; after defying monsters so furious and fell, that you should be overcome by an arrow out of a little urchin's quiver, is amazing! Have you not beheld the mummies of the beauteous Cleopatra, and of the fair consorts of the Ptolemies, without one amorous sigh! And now to fall a victim to a mere modern human widow is most unworthy of you! What qualities has a woman, that you have not vanquished! Her tears are not more apt to betray than those of the crocodile, she is hardly as deceitful as the Siren, less deadly, I believe, than the basilisk or rattlesnake, scarce as changeable as Proteus, nor more dangerous than Scylla and Charybdis, as docile and faithful as the dog of the Nile, sociable as the lion, and mild, sure, as the tiger! As her qualities are not more deadly than those of the animals you have despised, what is it that has conquered you? Can it be her beauty? Is she as handsome as the empress of the woods? as well accommodated as the many-chambered sailor?

* This anonymous letter was written by miss Robinson, and sent to Dr. Shaw, the traveller, at the instigation, and for the amusement, of the duchess of Portland and her society.

or as skilful as the nautilus? You will find many a creature by earth, air, and water, that is more beautiful than a woman; but indeed she is composed of all elements, and

"Fire, water, woman, are man's ruin,
And great's thy danger, Thomas Bruin."

But you will tell me she has all the beauties in nature united, in her person; as ivory in her forehead, diamonds in her eyes, &c.

"But where's the sense, direct or moral,
That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral?"

If she is a dowdy, what can you do with her? If she is a beauty, what will she do for you? A man of your profession might know the lilies of the field toil not, neither do they spin; if she is rich she won't buy you, if she is poor I don't see why she should borrow you. But, I fear, I am advising in vain, while your heart, like a fritter, is frying in fat in Cupid's flames. How frail and weak is flesh! else, sure, so much might have kept in one little heart; had Cupid struck the lean, or the melancholy, I had not lamented; but true Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, merry Jack Falstaff, *fat Jack Falstaff*, beware the foul fiend, they call it Marriage, beware on't! As what I have advanced on the subject of matrimony is absolutely unanswerable, I need not tell you where to direct a letter for me, nor will I, in my pride, declare who I am that give you this excellent counsel; but, that you may not despair of knowing where to address your thanks for such an extraordinary favour, I will promise, that before you find a courtier without deceit, a patriot without spleen, a lawyer without quibble, a philosopher without pride, a wit without vanity, a fool without presumption, or any man without conceit, you shall find the true name of your well-wisher and faithful counsellor,

LETTER XLVIII.

*From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the
Duchess of Portland.*

Mount Morris, Jan. 31.

Madam,

Your grace will scarce believe me if I tell you I have not yet had time to write

a long letter. Not time! says my lady duchess, then she has no other material, I am sure. You will want to know how I can have employed that superfluity of time which lies upon my hands; I have done with it as the rich do with their abundance; I have wasted it, lavished it on trifles; and now that I would purchase some real happiness with it, it is spent and consumed. Your grace knows I am often prodigal of time, and so it has been with me to-day; for the sun has set upon my idleness, and I have many letters to write; some of them about business, in which I must be concise and explicit; things I cannot bring about without vast labour of brain. I can spin a thread so long it seems neither to have end nor beginning, which serves to give my gentle correspondents an idea of eternity; but though such things are very acceptable to people of much leisure and speculation, a man of business would hardly be content with what had neither meaning nor end, the purport and the conclusion being chiefly regarded by the vulgar. You say nothing of lady Andover; but whether that implies that she is or is not in town, I don't know, for absent or present your grace thinks of her very much. Why do you tell me you cannot make a return for my letters? You wrong my heart if you do not believe every line you write makes me happier than my best deserts can merit. I think the days I hear from you take a happy date from the very hour the letter comes. Those things that before were objects of indifference, by the pleasant disposition of my mind become agreeable. I am ashamed that I uttered some complaints of your silence; but think, when we are touched in the tenderest part, how sorely we complain! I am so unreasonable, that I expect your love, your remembrance, your thoughts. Love is very covetous, and I fear I am of a selfish temper, for of the affection of my friends I am very tenacious; if I am not so of other things it is indifference, and not generosity, that I do not see happiness in them, rather than that I slight them from philosophy. The sea of politics runs high; first-rates, frigates, barges, oars, and scullers, all running with the stream. We have had all the various reports of rumour conveyed to us by Fame's light horse, the post; and I find hopes and

fears fly about extremely. May chastisement mend those that are chastised, and power enlarge the hearts of such as are advanced! so shall I say Amen to all the will of Fortune; but if she fills her house with spirits more unclean than the former, I value the topmost niche in her wheel less than the lowest spoke in a wheelbarrow. I am glad things go on so quietly; I have but just courage enough to serve me in time of peace; and for riots, seditions, wars, and rumours of wars, they sore affright me. I think one man has acted a wise part, but who acts wisely is not therefore wise, says Mr. Pope, in general, and it may be perhaps wondrously applicable to this particular case. However, if this head wants wisdom, it has that ornament which many prefer to it, even that which ambition and pride will stoop to, justice bend to, wisdom submit to, and religion worship with an idolatrous adoration; it is a circle that bewitches the mind of man: yet the wisest preacher, some thousand years ago, said, a wise child whose head was bound by a homely biggin was better; but the preachers of now-a-days say otherwise. I am glad sir Robert gets off safe; foe to his pride, but friend to his distress, I wish he may neither do nor suffer harm. Mr. Pelham's advancement, I believe, is as happy for the public as for himself. There are many honourable men named of all sides to be put in; I do not hear that many are ready to go out. As for the two your grace mentioned, if a purification be intended, I fear it will be necessary they should be done away. I hear Mr. Pulteney will not take a place, which is a noble piece of integrity; but I hope he will not be inflexible, for power is well lodged in those hands that take it as a sceptre of mercy rather than as a rod of rule; and if a person does not value places, they are the fitter to be trusted with them, since they will not then hold them on bad terms. I imagine the study of physiognomy must be very entertaining at present. One might see hope sitting in a dimple, fear skulking in a frown, haughtiness sitting on the triumphal arch of an eyebrow, and shame lurking under the eyelids; then in wise bye-standers we might see conjecture drawing the eyebrows together, or amazement lifting them up. A

man in place bringing his flexible countenance to the taste of the present times, smiling about the mouth as if he was pleased with the change, but wearing a little gloom on the forehead, that betrays his fear of losing by it. Men, that never were of any consequence, wrapping themselves up in the mystery of politics, and seeming significant; as if, when times alter, they had a right to expect to be wise. Then the vacant smiling countenances of those civil people, that would intimate they would do any thing for any body. The asses, that, in lions' skins, have brayed for their party, throwing off their fierceness, and appearing in their proper shape of patient folly, that will carry a heavy burden through dirty roads. Then the state swallows, that have ever lived in the sunshine of favour, withdrawing from the declining season of power. Then the thermometers, weathercocks, and dials of the state, will scarce know what to say, how to turn, or which way to point. They, who have changed their coat with every blast, what must they do till they know which way the wind blows? Unhappy ignorance, that knows not if preferment comes from the east, or from the west, or yet from the south! Then what will those noble patriots do, whose honesty consists in being always angry, now they know not whom to be angry with? These occurrences give one too great an insight into mankind, for one receives bad impressions of them by seeing them in these hurries; while, for haste, they leave the cloak of hypocrisy behind, and shew the patched, stained, and motley habit of their minds. There is a danger in seeing others are wicked; it seems to dissolve the covenant of faith, and slackens good-will. But when we observe how little peace attends even the success of wickedness, that power cannot purchase friends, nor pomp acquire esteem, nor greatness procure honour, but that the end is contempt where the means are base, it must sure abate the appetite to ill. Power and pomp are of no use but to make servants and admirers; and could reason but persuade people, that if ill acquired they gain false friends and real enemies, feigned flattery and concealed contempt, not more gazers than censurers, not more noise than ill fame, few would endea-

vour to obtain a painful and hateful pre-eminence. But flattery, "parent of wicked, bane of honest deeds," represents to the great, that every servile cringe; is zealous adoration, and every self-interested follower a sincere friend. What a deal of pains do some people take to make knaves envy, and fools admire, though they would be ashamed to own they valued the opinions of such people. Strange that the proudest should court the opinions of the most contemptible! I am sure your grace thinks I am not capable of envy, or you would not have made me liable to the sin, by saying you had so much company that I covet, and that they had your company, which most of all things I covet. I would fain have been any one of you to have been happy with the rest. We are quite alone here: I am not sorry for it, for I do not like, as some good folks do, every creature that walks on two legs, with a face to look up to heaven or down on the earth, and yet understands neither; an animal that has missed of instinct, and not lit upon reason; one that thinks by prejudice, speaks by rote, and lives by custom; that dares do no good without an example, but dares do evil by precedent, whose conversation is composed of more remnants than a tailor's waistcoat, who snips off every man's superfluous observations to the patching of one sentence; an inconsistency of thought that makes monstrous opinions, and an absurdity of memory that has laid up every fool's proverb as an infallible maxim; one that thinks every thing wise his grandfather did, and every thing foolish that his juniors do; who will not learn, and cannot teach; who, if he does wrong or right, acts from some prejudice he got when he was a boy; so one can neither blame, nor praise, nor love, nor hate, nor laugh, nor cry for him, or any thing he does. I had rather have the dead palsy than such a companion. Any impertinent lively creature is better than these gentry. I am sleepy with thinking of them: the horrid family of the Gorgons would be as welcome to me. I shall be very glad to hear the duke and lady Fanny are well. Adieu, my dear lady duchess; believe, that as long as I exist, I ever shall be with the tenderest, sincerest, most grateful, and constant affection, yours,

E. R.

LETTER XLIX.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Allerthorpe, Oct. 2, 1742.

My most dear friend,
 LOVE is the fulfilling of the law; your grace orders me to write to you a sheet of quarto paper brimful; behold, my inclination, exceeding your command, has chosen a folio. Most glad I am to lengthen out the time I may thus employ. How few conversations are there wherein the head or the heart are interested! If the country would afford a few reasonable companions, or burthen us with none that are not so, it would really make life a different thing; but for me, who have not any sociable instinct, to lead me to creatures merely human, and, I think, scarce rational, it is really not a place of uninterrupted felicity. I do hourly thank my stars I am not married to a country squire, or a beau; for in the country all my pleasure is in my own fire-side, and that only when it is not littered with queer creatures. One must receive visits and return them, such is the civil law of the nations; and if you are not more happy in it in Nottinghamshire than I am in Yorkshire, I pity you most feelingly. In London, if one meets with impertinence and offence, one seeks entertainment and pleasure only; but here one commits wilful murder on the hours, and with premeditated malice to oneself becometh *felo de se* for whole days. For an antediluvian a dining visit was proportioned to the time he had to throw away, but for the juniors of Methusalem to be thus prodigal of life is the way to be soon bankrupt of leisure and happiness. Could you but see all the good folks that visit my poor tabernacle; O, your grace would pity and admire! You make complaints of a want of conversation; to your sighs I reply in murmurs. When may I hope for our meeting in London? Till you come, kings' palaces and high places appear desolate. The parliament, I hear, will meet on the 15th of November, but you did not use to come up till January—a barbarous and heathenish custom; though when I was passing time in the delights of Bullstrode I was of another opinion. O Bullstrode, Bullstrode! when I forget thee, may my

head and hand forget their cunning! A small loss perhaps you will think for the most unpolitic head and the most unskilful hand in the world; but their little *savoir faire* is necessary. I hope to see Bullstrode again before my eyes grow dim with age, and, what is more presumptuous, to see the honour and ornaments of Bullstrode at Sandleford. Mr. William Robinson is just come, I must go down to him.

I am returned again to my dear lady duchess; I stole from the company below stairs, after they had drunk tea, and have again for the thousandth time read over your delightful letter; you have brought wit out of — and —: verily I had not known the trees by the fruit; but you can work wonders when you please. They are indeed half as witty as sir John Falstaff; that is, they are the cause of wit in other people. Your account of them is extremely entertaining; but I forgot that you never could write tolerably, but were always a mighty dull correspondent: you have told me so a thousand times, and it is a strange thing I never could remember it. I should be glad to have a party of horse to guard your letters, but for mine I am assured they will go very safely by the bye-post; if I revoke I will pay two tricks, as they do at cards. I am sorry my first letter was not so formidably formal* as it should have been; but, to say the truth, I thought if it was too much upon the serious it would be suspected of being wrote for the occasion. As for what I said of Don, if — likes her, we are of the same opinion, if not we shall not be rivals. I said, in my last letter, that I should not write to you till I had finished my peregrinations, and intimated that I should forbear troubling you with a letter till I could send your grace a map of Yorkshire: you may suppose that was said on purpose to prevent any inquiries after my letters, for as to my travels, the serjeant's circuit round the fire would be a tour as well worthy of memory. Pray when shall you visit the noble family at Brodsworth? I wish I was in their neighbourhood; I fancy it is a paradisaical family, and having the honour to be in some degree of favour with your grace, I should

hope to be admitted to their acquaintance. I honour their manner of life, and affection for each other; to maintain continual cheerfulness, without the gay pleasures of our great city, is great praise. Oh that you were to go, with only the duke, to Brodsworth, and that Doncaster were within a day's journey from hence! I have love for your company that would, if not remove mountains, pass them. We might meet at Doncaster, if it were not for that odious impediment of almost all human desires, impossibility. I should be much diverted to hear that Desdemona was enamoured by these stories "passing strange;" the hero being a fair man into the bargain, and having, in all "hair-breadth 'scapes," received not one scar, it is not impossible but something "wondrous pitiful" may be awakened in her tender heart. I return a thousand thanks for your long letter; I rejoice that the duke and the little angels are well.

I am, madam, your grace's ever grateful, affectionate, faithful, humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

LETTER L.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Nov. 5.

Madam,

My heart and hand are too much yours to permit me to employ another's to dictate, or write to your grace, when I am able to do it. I had your letter, for which I am obliged to you: I feel all the sensibility of friendship when I reflect you are unhappy. I hope my lord duke will have no more of the complaint in his stomach. Lady Oxford really knows her remedy, and I hope you will prevail upon her ladyship to go to Bath. I had not any letter from Dr. Sandys, but you know he has always a very tedious labour when he goes of a letter. I wish he was well delivered of this, for I am impatient to know my doom; whether I am to sit here, like Patience on a monument, or may be allowed, in my quondam character of a Fidget, to bustle into the bustling world. My appetite for the country is satisfied, and I should like to see London fine town again; and I shall be a poor wife (pity, but for the verse, it were maiden) forsaken,

* The duchess was unwilling to show the whole of their intimate correspondence to lady Oxford.

"Yet must bear a contented mind,
But when leave of me he has taken,
I can't have another as kind."

The last line sets forth the melancholy circumstance. As for single ladies, the loss of a lover is nothing; for, as Milla-mant says, one makes as many as one pleases, and keeps them as long as one pleases; but it is worth while to take care of a good husband, for they are reckoned rarities. I am pretty well at present, but I don't much like this sort of constitution. I believe Sandys would not tell his wife a secret for fear she should go abroad to tell it; and, you know, he loves she should sit, like sober puss in the corner, to offend all those who would annoy the cheese, or other good things in his cupboard; for, I guess, it is from some principle of economy that he keeps her at home.

I am, madam, your grace's faithful,
humble servant,

E. M.

LETTER LI.

From the same to the same.

Allerthorpe, Nov. 19, 1742.

Madam,

WHAT prophets are my fears! they whispered to me your grace was not well, and I find their suggestions were true. Hard state of things, that one may believe one's fears, but cannot rely upon one's hopes! I imagined concern would have an ill effect on your constitution; I know you have many pledges in the hands of fate, and I feared for you, and every thing that was near and dear to you. I am sensible your regard and tenderness for lady Oxford will make you suffer extremely when you see her ill; she has therefore a double portion of my good wishes, on her own and your grace's account. When sensibility of heart and head makes you feel all the outrages that fortune and folly offer, why do you not envy the thoughtless giggle and unmeaning smile? "In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble Joy." Wisdom's cup is often dashed with sorrow, but the nepenthe of stupidity is the only medicine of life; fools neither are troubled with fear nor doubt. What did the wisdom of the wisest man teach him? Verily, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit! A

painful lesson fools will never learn, for they are of all vanities most vain. And there is not so sweet a companion as that same vanity; when we go into the world it leads us by the hand; if we retire from it, it follows us; it meets us at court, and finds us in the country; commends the hero that gains the world, and the philosopher that forsakes it; praises the luxury of the prodigal, and the prudence of the penurious; feasts with the voluptuous, fasts with the abstemious, sits on the pen of the author, and visits the paper of the critic; reads dedications, and writes them; makes court to superiors, receives homage of inferiors; in short, it is useful, it is agreeable, and the very thing needful to happiness: had Solomon felt some inward vanity, sweet sounds had been ever in his ears without the voices of men-singers, or women-singers; he had not then said of laughter, what is it? and of mirth, what doeth it? Vanity, and a good set of teeth, would have taught him the ends and purposes of laughing, that fame may be acquired by it, where, like the proposal for the grinning wager,

"The frightfullest grinner
Is the winner."

Did not we think lady C—— would get nothing by that broad grin but the tooth-ache? But vanity, profitable vanity, was her better counsellor; and as she always imagined the heart of a lover was caught between her teeth, I cannot say his delay is an argument of her charms, or his gallantry, but she has him secure by an old proverb, that what is bred in the bone will never out of the flesh, and no doubt but this love was bred in the bone, even in the jaw-bone. No wonder if tame, weak man, is subdued by that weapon with which Sampson killed the mighty lion. Mr. Montagu got well to London on Monday night. I am glad your facetious senator is gone to parliament, where all his conversation will be yea, yea, and nay, nay; and even of that cometh evil sometimes. Time will not allow me to lengthen this epistle with any thing more than my sister's compliments to your grace.

I am, madam, yours, &c.

E. M.

LETTER LII.

*From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the
Duchess of Portland.*

Nov. 28, 1742.

Madam,

I AM very sorry I have not received all the letters your grace has been so good as to write to me; Fate received them into her left hand, and I am deprived of them. I am glad to hear your spirits are better; may circling Joys dance round your fire-side,

“With Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides!”

for life is too short to allow for melancholy fears and intruding cares, which are apt to fill up the youthful time, when we are fittest for happiness. Age will bring its solemn train of woe; let us therefore admit all Youth's gay company, smiling Joy, cheerful Mirth, and happy Hope; life's early Hours come dancing along with their fair partner Pleasure; but in the evening of our day they tread a heavy measure, dragging after them weak Infirmary and sad Regret,

“Expense, and after-thought, and idle care,
And doubts of motley hue, and dark despair.”

I grieve whenever I think your mind is pained; all infirmities and diseases of the body are nothing compared to anguish of heart. I am now in the highest content; my little brothers are to go to Westminster as soon as the holidays are over, and what adds still to my pleasure in this is, that Jacky's going is owing to Mr. Montagu's intercession for him with my father, who did not design his going to Westminster till next year: our youngest, I believe, is to go out with our new captain. I would give a great deal for a tête-à-tête with your grace, *mais hélas! ma pauvre tête n'est pas une tête ailée*. It would have been a strange and unnatural thing that Dr. Sandy's letter should have miscarried; my faith has swallowed his advice, and my throat his pills; so I have endured the country, and taken his physick, very unpalatable things both. I am pretty well, but I do not like to sit, like puss in the corner, all the winter, to watch what may prove a mouse, though I am no mountain. I am rejoiced lady Kinnoul, and the young ladies, are with you. I cannot boast of the numbers that adorn our fire-side; my sister and I are

the principal figures! besides, there is a round table, a square skreen, some books, and a work-basket, with a smelling bottle when morality grows musty, or a maxim smells too strong, as sometimes they will in ancient books. I had a letter to-day from Mr. Montagu, in which he flatters me with the hopes of seeing him at Christmas. I hear your grace's porter says you will not leave Welbeck these two months, and Elias is no lying man. I know, full well, however he may deny you by parcels, he will not thus in the gross: so, I imagine, you will not be in London this age, which makes me more contented with being in the country. My lady Croakledom is croaking on the banks of Styx, where, with Cerberus's barking mouths, and Tisiphone's *belle chevelure* she will make most pleasant melody: with such a noise in his ears how glad would Pluto be if Orpheus would give him a tune once more! Lady Limerick, imagining I came to town with Mr. Montagu, sent an excuse, that being ill, she had not been able to make me a visit. I guess it would raise great speculations why I was not come up, and had you been within question-shot, the good countess had popped off a volley upon you, I make no doubt. I hear lord Cobham and lord Gower are going to resign; and, I hope, with less regret than I resign my pen; but the letters are sent for. Time is a monarch that commands, as many sovereigns do, to the vexation and detriment of their subjects; therefore, to show my loyalty to King Time, I must obey his minister, the hour, that commands my letter hence. My sister desires her compliments.

I am, my dear lady duchess, your most grateful and affectionate,

E. MONTAGU.

LETTER LIII.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 8, 1743.

Madam,

I MAY now wish your grace joy of my lord duke's recovery, which indeed has been happy to the greatest degree after so bad an accident. You have put me into a sufficient fright about Mrs. Delany*; by what you say, I suspect, I di-

* Mrs. Pendarvis married Dr. Delany, the friend of Swift, 9th of June, 1743.

rected my letter to Mrs. *Pendarvis*. I think myself the more capable of it, because at *Allerthorpe*, when I wrote to acquaint my mother I could not take a journey to town because I was breeding, I signed myself *Robinson*, though really, while I wore that name, I do not remember I was ever in the like condition. I cannot tell what to say to Mrs. *Delany* about this mistake. I am sure I approved the match, and consented with my whole heart; but for this slip of the pen I cannot account; perhaps it might happen from the fright I was in for the duke; I am sure Mr. *Drummond* could not be in a greater fright when he saw all the *Hanoverians* in a panic. I want to know whether the secretary confessed his sins in his fear; for if a fright can make a minister forget his hypocrisy, well may it make me forget a name. I hope you found lady *Oxford* well at *Salt Hill*. I sigh, whenever I pass by *Slough*, to think of the days I have seen. I find the power of *Bullstrode* mighty still, and ever grieve to think I pass by it without calling. I hear her grace of *Kent* did me the honour to ask a great many civil questions after me of Mrs. *Meadows*. I design to go to visit the old dragon as soon as I come to town. I am afraid Mr. *Montagu's* continuing to vote against the ministry will hurt my complexion as bad as another lying-in. I have been petrifying my brains over a most solid and ponderous performance of a woman in this neighbourhood. Having always a love to see *Phæbus* in petticoats, I borrowed a book, written by an ancient gentlewoman skilled in *Latin*, dipt in *Greek*, and absorbed in *Hebrew*, besides a modern gift of tongues. By this learned person's instruction was Dr. *Pocock* (her son) skilled in antique lore, while other people are learning to spell monosyllables. But *Hebrew* being the mother tongue, you know, it is no wonder he learnt it. His gingerbread was marked with *Greek* characters, and his bread and butter, instead of glass windows, was printed with *Arabic*. He had a mummy for his jointed baby, and a little pyramid for his play-house. His copy-book was filled with hieroglyphics; and nothing modern and vulgar could be employed in the education of this learned woman's son. Mrs. *Pocock* lives in a village very near us, but has not visited here, so I have not had an opportunity

to observe her conversation; but really I believe she is a good woman, though but an indifferent author. She amuses herself in the country so as to be cheerful and sociable at threescore; is always employed either in reading, working, or walking; and I do not hear that she is pedantic. What use she makes of her *Hebrew*, I cannot tell; but it is a strange piece, not of female, but of male curiosity, to learn it. I am told she always carries a *Greek* or *Hebrew* bible to church. I desire your grace to make ten thousand apologies for me to Mrs. *Delany*, if it is really true that I would have robbed her of a good name; but I hope you only said this to put me in terrors. I desire my best compliments to her and Dr. *Delany*, to whom I wish very well, though I have offered the shadow of a great injury in seeming to deprive them of each other. I send my friendly love to dear *Donnellan*, my sincere good wishes to my lord duke for recovering his mischief, and to the little ones that they keep free from all harm. I congratulate Mr. *Achard* upon the duke's recovery, and to Mr. *Drummond* I wish a perseverance in mirth, wit, and good humour. I am ever your grace's most devoted

E. M.

LETTER LIV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Mrs. Donnellan.

York, August, 1744.

I AM now writing to you from the very place from whence I began my journey of life. You will think that I may feel some uneasiness on the reflection of returning to this place, after so many years wandering through the world, with so little improvement and addition of merit, which is all that time leaves behind it. Too true it is that reflection has given some pain, and cost me a sigh or two; but it is some comfort that my blank page has not been blotted with the stains of vice; if any good deeds shall ever be written there, they will be legible, and suffer no various interpretations even from critics. Twenty-two years and ten months ago I was just the age my son is now: as his way through life will lie through the high roads of ambition and pleasure, he will hardly

pass so unspotted, but, I hope, a better-informed, traveller than I have done through my little private path. His account will consist of many articles, pray God the balance may be right! I would have him think joy is for the pure of heart, and not giddily sacrifice the smallest part of integrity in hope of making large amends by deeds of estimation. But thus it is always with his sex, and a man thinks it is no more necessary to be as innocent as a woman, than to be as fair. Poor little man, may Heaven protect him! I wish he may be of as contented a spirit at the same age as his mother; and that his cheerfulness too may arise, not from love of himself, but from the possession of good and amiable friends. I would, to this purpose, wish him as many brothers, but I have some private objections arising from self-love against that wish, so I will leave that to his merit and discernment, which to me has arisen from accident. I ought to have epistolized you before I came so near the end of my journey, but we filled up our time with seeing all the places that lay within our route; the first was Oxford, which you know so well I shall say nothing about it; nor would the Muses permit my grey goose quill to describe their sacred haunt. From thence we went to Stowe, of which so much has been said and written. I shall only tell you how I was affected by the gardens, of which probably neither verse nor prose writer would ever inform you. It is indeed a princely garden, more like, I believe, to that where the sapient king held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse, than to Paradise, its beauties are the effects of expense and taste; the objects you see are various, yet the result is not variety. Lord Cobham has done by his garden as kings do by their subjects, made difference by title and artificial addition, where nature made none; yet altogether it is a pleasing scene, where a philosophic mind would enjoy full happiness, the disappointed ambitious some consolation. The buildings are many of them censured by connoisseurs as bad; however, their intention and use is good; they are, for the most part, dedicated to the memory of the wise, the good, and great; so they raise in the ambitious a noble emulation, in the humble a virtuous veneration; kinds of homage that mend the heart

that pays them. From Stowe we went to my brother Montagu's in Leicestershire, where we passed a week very agreeably. The next place we saw was T——; the house is large, but the company it has of late received makes one see it with prejudice; the luxury of a hogstye must be disgusting; indeed I was glad to get out of the house, every creature in it, and every thing one saw was displeasing; as to the park, it wants nature's cheerful livery, the sprightly green; the famous cascade did not please me, who have seen some made by the bounteous hand of Nature, to which man's magnificence is poor and *chétive*. From hence we came to York, where we have just been viewing the cathedral; of all the gothic buildings I ever saw, the most noble, taken together, or considered in parts. Gothic architecture, like gothic government, seems to make strength and power of resistance its chief pride; this noble cathedral looks as if it might defy the consuming power of all-devouring Time. We are to visit the fine assembly room before we leave York, which, I hear, is built in the manner of an Egyptian hall, or banquetting-room. Dr. Shaw would tell us in what place Cleopatra would have chosen to sit. I must put an end to my letter, which has been something in the style of the raree-showman, "you shall see what you shall see." I am, dear madam, your most sincere and faithful humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

LETTER LV.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of —.

Rotterdam, Aug. 3, O. S. 1716.

I FLATTER myself (dear sister) that I shall give you some pleasure in letting you know that I have safely passed the sea, though we had the ill fortune of a storm. We were persuaded by the captain of the yacht to set out in a calm, and he pretended there was nothing so easy as to tide it over; but, after two days slowly moving, the wind blew so hard, that none of the sailors could keep their feet, and we were all Sunday night tossed very handsomely. I never saw a man more frightened than the captain. For my part, I have been so lucky nei-

ther to suffer from fear nor sea-sickness; though, I confess, I was so impatient to see myself once more upon dry land, that I would not stay till the yacht could get to Rotterdam, but went in the long-boat to Helvoetsluys, where we had *voitures* to carry us to the Briel. I was charmed with the neatness of that little town; but my arrival at Rotterdam presented me a new scene of pleasure. All the streets are paved with broad stones, and before many of the meanest artificer's doors are placed seats of various coloured marbles, so neatly kept, that, I'll assure you, I walked almost all over the town yesterday, *incognito*, in my slippers, without receiving one spot of dirt; and you may see the Dutch maids washing the pavement of the street, with more application than ours do our bed-chambers. The town seems so full of people, with such busy faces all in motion, that I can hardly fancy it is not some celebrated fair; but I see it is every day the same. It is certain no town can be more advantageously situated for commerce. Here are seven large canals, on which the merchant-ships come up to the very doors of their houses. The shops and warehouses are of a surprising neatness and magnificence, filled with an incredible quantity of fine merchandize, and so much cheaper than what we see in England, that I have much ado to persuade myself that I am still so near it. Here is neither dirt nor beggary to be seen. One is not shocked with those loathsome cripples, so common in London, nor teased with the importunity of idle fellows and wenches, that choose to be nasty and lazy. The common servants and little shop-women here are more nicely clean than most of our ladies, and the great variety of neat dresses (every woman dressing her head after her own fashion) is an additional pleasure in seeing the town. You see, hitherto, I make no complaints, dear sister, and if I continue to like travelling as well as I do at present, I shall not repent my project. It will go a great way in making me satisfied with it, if it affords me an opportunity of entertaining you. But it is not from Holland that you must expect a disinterested offer. I can write enough in the style of Rotterdam, to tell you plainly, in one word, that I expect returns of all the London

news. You see I have already learnt to make a good bargain, and that it is not for nothing I will so much as tell you I am your affectionate sister.

LETTER LVI.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. S.—

Hague, Aug. 5, O. S. 1716.

I MAKE haste to tell you, dear madam, that after all the dreadful fatigues you threatened me with, I am hitherto very well pleased with my journey. We take care to make such short stages every day, that I rather fancy myself upon parties of pleasure than upon the road, and sure nothing can be more agreeable than travelling in Holland. The whole country appears a large garden; the roads are well paved, shaded on each side with rows of trees, and bordered with large canals, full of boats passing and repassing. Every twenty paces gives you the prospect of some villa, and every four hours that of a large town, so surprisingly neat, I am sure you would be charmed with them. The place I am now at is certainly one of the finest villages in the world. Here are several squares finely built, and (what I think a particular beauty) the whole set with thick large trees. The *Voor-hout* is, at the same time, the Hyde Park and Mall of the people of quality; for they take the air in it both on foot and in coaches. There are shops for wafers, cool liquors, &c. I have been to see several of the most celebrated gardens, but I will not tease you with their descriptions. I dare swear you think my letter already long enough. But I must not conclude without begging your pardon, for not obeying your commands, in sending the lace you ordered me. Upon my word, I can yet find none, that is not dearer than you may buy it in London. If you want any India goods, here are great variety of pennyworths, and I shall follow your orders with great pleasure and exactness, being, dear madam, &c. &c.

LETTER LVII.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. S. C.

Nimeguen, Aug. 13, O. S. 1716.

I AM extremely sorry, my dear S., that your fears of disobliging your relations, and their fears for your health and safety, have hindered me from enjoying the

happiness of your company, and you the pleasure of a diverting journey. I receive some degree of mortification from every agreeable novelty, or pleasing prospect, by the reflection of your having so unluckily missed the delight which I know it would have given you. If you were with me in this town, you would be ready to expect to receive visits from your Nottingham friends. No two places were ever more resembling; one has but to give the Maese the name of the Trent, and there is no distinguishing the prospect. The houses, like those of Nottingham, are built one above another, and are intermixed, in the same manner, with trees and gardens. The tower, they call Julius Cæsar's, has the same situation with Nottingham Castle; and I cannot help fancying I see from it the Trent field, Adboulton, places so well known to us. It is true, the fortifications make a considerable difference. All the learned in the art of war bestow great commendations on them; for my part, that know nothing of the matter, I shall content myself with telling you, it is a very pretty walk on the ramparts, on which there is a tower, very deservedly called the Belvidere, where people go to drink coffee, tea, &c. and enjoy one of the finest prospects in the world. The public walks have no great beauty, but the thick shade of the trees, which is solemnly delightful. But I must not forget to take notice of the bridge, which appeared very surprising to me. It is large enough to hold hundreds of men, with horses and carriages. They give the value of an English two pence to get upon it, and then away they go, bridge and all, to the other side of the river, with so slow a motion, one is hardly sensible of any at all. I was yesterday at the French church, and stared very much at their manner of service. The parson clapped on a broad-brimmed hat, in the first place, which gave him entirely the air of, what d'ye call him, in Bartholomew fair, which he kept up by extraordinary antic gestures, and preaching much such stuff as t'other talked to the puppets. However, the congregation seemed to receive it with great devotion; and I was informed, by some of his flock, that he is a person of particular fame amongst them. I believe by this time you are as much tired with my account of him, as I was with his sermon; but

I am sure your brother will excuse a digression in favour of the church of England. You know, speaking disrespectfully of the Calvinists, is the same thing as speaking honourably of the church. Adieu, my dear S., always remember me, and be assured I can never forget you. &c. &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady——.

Cologne, Aug. 16, O. S. 1716.

IF my lady —— could have any notion of the fatigues that I have suffered these two last days, I am sure she would own it a great proof of regard that I now sit down to write to her. We hired horses from Nimeguen hither, not having the conveniency of the post, and found but very indifferent accommodations at Reinberg, our first stage; but it was nothing to what I suffered yesterday. We were in hopes to reach Cologne; our horses tired at Stamel, three hours from it, where I was forced to pass the night in my clothes, in a room not at all better than a hovel; for though I have my bed with me, I had no mind to undress where the wind came from a thousand places. We left this wretched lodging at day break, and about six, this morning, came safe here, where I got immediately into bed. I slept so well for three hours, that I found myself perfectly recovered, and have had spirits enough to go and see all that is curious in the town; that is to say, the churches, for here is nothing else worth seeing. This is a very large town, but the most part of it is old built. The Jesuit's church, which is the neatest, was shewed me, in a very complaisant manner, by a handsome young Jesuit; who, not knowing who I was, took a liberty in his compliments and raileries, which very much diverted me, having never before seen any thing of that nature. I could not enough admire the magnificence of the altars, the rich images of the saints (all massy silver), and the encasures of the relics, though I could not help murmuring, in my heart, at the profusion of pearls, diamonds, and rubies, bestowed on the adornment of rotten teeth and dirty rags. I own that I had wickedness enough to covet St. Ursula's pearl necklace; though perhaps

this was no wickedness at all, an image not being certainly one's neighbour; but I went yet farther, and wished the wench herself converted into dressing plate. I should also gladly see converted into silver, a great St. Christopher, which I imagine would look very well in a cistern. These were my pious reflections; though I was very well satisfied to see, piled up to the honour of our nation, the skulls of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. I have seen some hundreds of relics here of no less consequence; but I will not imitate the common style of travellers so far as to give you a list of them, being persuaded that you have no manner of curiosity for the titles given to jaw bones and bits of wormeaten wood. Adieu, I am just going to supper, where I shall drink your health in an admirable sort of Lorrain wine, which I am sure is the same you call Burgundy in London, &c. &c.

LETTER LIX.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of B——.

Nuremburg, Aug. 22, O. S. 1716.

AFTER five days travelling post, I could not sit down to write on any other occasion than to tell my dear lady, that I have not forgot her obliging command of sending her some account of my travels. I have already passed a large part of Germany; I have seen all that is remarkable in Cologne, Frankfort, Wurtsburg, and this place. It is impossible not to observe the difference between the free towns, and those under the government of absolute princes, as all the little sovereigns of Germany are. In the first there appears an air of commerce and plenty. The streets are well built, and full of people neatly and plainly dressed. The shops are loaded with merchandise, and the commonalty are clean and cheerful. In the other, you see a sort of shabby finery, a number of dirty people of quality tawdered out; narrow nasty streets out of repair, wretchedly thin of inhabitants, and above half of the common sort asking alms. I cannot help fancying one, under the figure of a clean Dutch citizen's wife, and the other like a poor town lady of pleasure, painted, and ribboned out in her head dress, with

tarnished silver-laced shoes, a ragged under petticoat, a miserable mixture of vice and poverty. They have sumptuary laws in this town, which distinguish their rank by their dress, prevent the excess which ruins so many other cities, and has a more agreeable effect to the eye of a stranger than our fashions. I need not be ashamed to own, that I wish these laws were in force in other parts of the world. When one considers impartially the merit of a rich suit of clothes in most places, the respect and the smiles of favour it procures, not to speak of the envy and the sighs it occasions (which is very often the principal charm to the wearer), one is forced to confess, that there is need of an uncommon understanding to resist the temptation of pleasing friends and mortifying rivals; and that it is natural to young people to fall into a folly, which betrays them to that want of money, which is the source of a thousand basenesses. What numbers of men have begun the world with generous inclinations, that have afterwards been the instruments of bringing misery on a whole people, being led by a vain expense into debts that they could clear no other way but by the forfeit of their honour, and which they never could have contracted, if the respect the multitude pays to habits, was fixed by law, only to a particular colour or cut of plain cloth. These reflections draw after them others that are too melancholy. I will make haste to put them out of your head by the farce of relics, with which I have been entertained in all Romish churches.

The Lutherans are not quite free from these follies. I have seen here, in the principal church, a large piece of the cross set in jewels, and the point of the spear, which, they told me, very gravely, was the same that pierced the side of our Saviour. But I was particularly diverted in a little Roman Catholic church which is permitted here, where the professors of that religion are not very rich, and consequently cannot adorn their images in so rich a manner as their neighbours. For, not to be quite destitute of all finery, they have dressed up an image of our Saviour over the altar, in a fair full-bottomed wig, very well powdered. I imagine I see your ladyship stare at this article, of which you very much doubt the veracity; but, upon my word, I have

not yet made use of the privilege of a traveller, and my whole account is written with the same plain sincerity of heart, with which I assure you that I am, dear madam, your, &c. &c.

LETTER LX.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. P——.

Ratisbon, Aug. 30, O. S. 1716.

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours but the day before I left London. I give you a thousand thanks for your good wishes, and have such an opinion of their efficacy, that I am persuaded I owe, in part, to them the good luck of having proceeded so far on my long journey without any ill accident. For I do not reckon it any to have been stopped a few days in this town by a cold, since it has not only given me an opportunity of seeing all that is curious in it, but of making some acquaintance with the ladies, who have all been to see me with great civility, particularly madame ———, the wife of our king's envoy from Hanover. She has carried me to all the assemblies; and I have been magnificently entertained at her house, which is one of the finest here. You know that all the nobility of this place are envoys from different states. Here are a great number of them; and they might pass their time agreeably enough, if they were less delicate on the point of ceremony. But instead of joining in the design of making the town as pleasant to one another as they can, and improving their little societies, they amuse themselves no other way than with perpetual quarrels, which they take care to eternise, by leaving them to their successors; and an envoy to Ratisbon receives, regularly, half a dozen quarrels, among the perquisites of his employment. You may be sure the ladies are not wanting, on their side, in cherishing and improving these important piques, which divide the town almost into as many parties as there are families. They choose rather to suffer the mortification of sitting almost alone on their assembly nights, than to recede one jot from their pretensions. I have not been here above a week, and yet I have heard from almost every one of them, the whole history of their wrongs, and dreadful complaints of the

injustice of their neighbours, in hopes to draw me to their party. But I think it very prudent to remain neuter, though if I was to stay amongst them, there would be no possibility of continuing so, their quarrels running so high, that they will not be civil to those that visit their adversaries. The foundation of these everlasting disputes turns entirely upon rank, place, and the title of Excellency, which they all pretend to, and, what is very hard, will give it to nobody. For my part, I could not forbear advertising them (for the public good) to give the title of Excellency to every body, which would include the receiving it from every body; but the very mention of such a dishonourable peace was received with as much indignation as Mrs. Blackaire did the motion of a reference. And, indeed, I began to think myself ill natured, to offer to take from them, in a town where there are so few diversions, so entertaining an amusement. I know that my peaceable disposition already gives me a very ill figure, and that it is publicly whispered as a piece of impertinent pride in me, that I have hitherto been saucily civil to every body, as if I thought nobody good enough to quarrel with. I should be obliged to change my behaviour, if I did not intend to pursue my journey in a few days. I have been to see the churches here, and had the permission of touching the relics, which was never suffered in places where I was not known. I had by this privilege, the opportunity of making an observation which I doubt not might have been made in all the other churches, that the emeralds and rubies which they shew round their relics and images are most of them false; though they tell you that many of the crosses and madonnas, set round with these stones, have been the gifts of emperors and other great princes. I do not doubt indeed but they were at first jewels of value; but the good fathers have found it convenient to apply them to other uses, and the people are just as well satisfied with bits of glass amongst these relics. They shewed me a prodigious claw set in gold, which they called the claw of a griffin, and I could not forbear asking the reverend priest that shewed it, whether the griffin was a saint? The question almost put him beside his gravity; but he answered, they only kept it as a curiosity. I was very

much scandalized at a large silver image of the Trinity, where the Father is represented under the figure of a decrepit old man, with a beard down to his knees, and triple crown on his head, holding in his arms the Son, fixed on the cross, and the Holy Ghost, in the shape of a dove, hovering over him. Madame —— is come this minute to call me to the assembly, and forces me to tell you very abruptly, that I am ever your, &c. &c.

LETTER LXI.

From the same to the Countess of ——.

Vienna, Sept. 8, O. S. 1716.

I am now, my dear sister, safely arrived at Vienna, and, I thank God, have not at all suffered in my health, nor (what is dearer to me) in that of my child, by all our fatigues. We travelled by water from Ratisbon, a journey perfectly agreeable, down the Danube, in one of those little vessels, that they, very properly, call wooden houses, having in them all the conveniences of a palace, stoves in the chambers, kitchens, &c. They are rowed by twelve men each, and move with such an incredible swiftness, that in the same day you have the pleasure of a vast variety of prospects, and within the space of a few hours you have the pleasure of seeing a populous city, adorned with magnificent palaces, and the most romantic solitudes, which appear distant from the commerce of mankind, the banks of the Danube being charmingly diversified with woods, rocks, mountains covered with vines, fields of corn, large cities, and ruins of ancient castles. I saw the great towns of Passau and Lintz, famous for the retreat of the imperial court, when Vienna was besieged. This town, which has the honour of being the emperor's residence, did not at all answer my expectation, nor ideas of it, being much less than I expected to find it; the streets are very close, and so narrow, one cannot observe the fine fronts of the palaces, though many of them very well deserve observation, being truly magnificent. They are all built of fine white stone, and are excessive high. For as the town is too little for the number of the people that desire to live in it, the builders seem to have projected to repair

that misfortune, by clapping one town on the top of another, most of the houses being of five, and some of them of six stories. You may easily imagine that, the streets being so narrow, the rooms are extremely dark, and, what is an inconvenience much more intolerable in my opinion, there is no house has so few as five or six families in it. The apartments of the greatest ladies, and even of the ministers of state, are divided but by a partition from that of a tailor or shoemaker; and I know nobody that has above two floors in any house, one for their own use, and one higher for their servants. Those that have houses of their own, let out the rest of them to whoever will take them; and thus the great stairs (which are all of stone) are as common and as dirty as the street. It is true, when you have once travelled through them, nothing can be more surprisingly magnificent than the apartments. They are commonly a *suite* of eight or ten large rooms, all inlaid, the doors and windows richly carved and gilt, and the furniture such as is seldom seen in the palaces of sovereign princes in other countries. Their apartments are adorned with hangings of the finest tapestry of Brussels, prodigious large looking glasses in silver frames, fine japan tables, beds, chairs, canopies and window curtains of the richest Genoa damask or velvet, almost covered with gold lace or embroidery. All this is made gay by pictures and vast jars of japan china, and large lustres of rock crystal. I have already had the honour of being invited to dinner by several of the first people of quality, and I must do them the justice to say, the good taste and magnificence of their tables very well answer to that of their furniture. I have been more than once entertained with fifty dishes of meat, all served in silver, and well dressed; the dessert proportionable, served in the finest china. But the variety and richness of their wines is what appears the most surprising. The constant way is to lay a list of their names upon the plates of the guests along with the napkins, and I have counted several times, to the number of eighteen different sorts, all exquisite in their kinds. I was yesterday at count Schoonbourn, the vice-chancellor's garden, where I was invited to dinner. I must own, I never saw a place so perfectly delightful as the Faux-

bourg of Vienna. It is very large, and almost wholly composed of delicious palaces. If the emperor found it proper to permit the gates of the town to be laid open, that the Fauxbourgs might be joined to it, he would have one of the largest and best-built cities in Europe. Count Schoonbourn's villa is one of the most magnificent; the furniture all rich brocades, so well fancied and fitted up, nothing can look more gay and splendid; not to speak of a gallery, full of rarities of coral, mother-of-pearl, and throughout the whole house a profusion of gilding, carving, fine paintings, the most beautiful porcelain, statues of alabaster and ivory, and vast orange and lemon-trees in gilt pots. The dinner was perfectly fine and well ordered, and made still more agreeable by the good-humour of the count. I have not yet been at court, being forced to stay for my gown, without which there is no waiting on the empress; though I am not without great impatience to see a beauty that has been the admiration of so many different nations. When I have had the honour, I will not fail to let you know my real thoughts, always taking a particular pleasure in communicating them to my dear sister.

LETTER LXII.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. P——.

Vienna, Sept. 14, O. S.

PERHAPS you will laugh at me, for thanking you very gravely for all the obliging concern you express for me. It is certain that I may, if I please, take the fine things you say to me for wit and raillery, and, it may be, it would be taking them right. But I never, in my life, was half so well disposed to take you in earnest as I am at present; and that distance which makes the continuation of your friendship improbable, has very much increased my faith in it. I find that I have (as well as the rest of my sex), whatever face I set on it, a strong disposition to believe in miracles. Do not fancy, however, that I am infected by the air of these popish countries; I have, indeed, so far wandered from the discipline of the church of England, as to have been last Sunday at the opera, which was performed in the

garden of the Favorita, and I was so much pleased with it, I have not repented my seeing it. Nothing of that kind ever was more magnificent; and I can easily believe, what I am told, that the decorations and habits cost the emperor thirty thousand pounds sterling. The stage was built over a very large canal, and at the beginning of the second act, divided into two parts, discovering the water, on which there immediately came, from different parts, two fleets of little gilded vessels, that gave the representation of a naval fight. It is not easy to imagine the beauty of this scene, which I took particular notice of. But all the rest were perfectly fine in their kind. The story of the opera is the enchantment of Alcina, which gives opportunities for great variety of machines and changes of the scenes, which are performed with a surprising swiftness. The theatre is so large that it is hard to carry the eye to the end of it, and the habits in the utmost magnificence, to the number of one hundred and eight. No house can hold such large decorations; but the ladies all sitting in the open air, exposes them to great inconveniences; for there is but one canopy for the imperial family; and the first night it was represented, a shower of rain happening, the opera was broke off, and the company crowded away in such confusion, that I was almost squeezed to death. But if their operas are thus delightful, their comedies are, in as high a degree, ridiculous. They have but one play-house, where I had the curiosity to go to a German comedy, and was very glad it happened to be the story of *Amphitryon*. As that subject has been already handled by a Latin, French, and English poet, I was curious to see what an Austrian author would make of it. I understand enough of that language to comprehend the greatest part of it, and besides I took with me a lady that had the goodness to explain to me every word. The way is to take a box, which holds four, for yourself and company. The fixed price is a gold ducat. I thought the house very low and dark; but I confess the comedy admirably recompensed that defect. I never laughed so much in my life. It began with Jupiter's falling in love out of a peep-hole in the clouds, and ended with the birth of Hercules. But what was most pleasant was, the

use Jupiter made of his metamorphosis ; for you no sooner saw him under the figure of Amphitryon, but instead of flying to Alcmena, with the raptures Mr. Dryden puts into his mouth, he sends for Amphitryon's tailor, and cheats him of a laced coat, and his banker of a bag of money, a Jew of a diamond ring, and bespeaks a great supper in his name ; and the greatest part of the comedy turns upon poor Amphitryon's being tormented by these people for their debts. Mercury uses Sosia in the same manner. But I could not easily pardon the liberty the poet has taken of larding his play with, not only indecent expressions, but such gross words as I do not think our mob would suffer from a mountebank. Besides, the two Sosias very fairly let down their breeches in the direct view of the boxes, which were full of people of the first rank, that seemed very well pleased with their entertainment, and assured me this was a celebrated piece. I shall conclude my letter with this remarkable relation, very well worthy the serious consideration of Mr. Collier. I will not trouble you with farewell compliments, which I think generally as impertinent as curtsies at leaving a room when the visit has been too long already.

LETTER LXIII.

From the same to the Countess of —.

Vienna, Sept. 14, O. S.

THOUGH I have so lately troubled you, my dear sister, with a long letter, yet I will keep my promise in giving you an account of my first going to court. In order to that ceremony, I was squeezed up in a gown, and adorned with a gorget, and the other implements thereunto belonging, a dress very inconvenient, but which certainly shews the neck and shape to great advantage. I cannot forbear giving you some description of the fashions here, which are more monstrous and contrary to all common sense and reason than it is possible for you to imagine. They build certain fabrics of gauze on their heads, about a yard high, consisting of three or four stories fortified with numberless yards of heavy ribbon. The foundation of this structure is a thing they call a *boulté*, which is

exactly of the same shape and kind, but about four times as big as those rolls our prudent milk-maids make use of to fix their pails upon. This machine they cover with their own hair, which they mix with a great deal of false, it being a particular beauty to have their heads too large to go into a moderate tub. Their hair is prodigiously powdered to conceal the mixture, and set out with three or four rows of bodkins (wonderfully large, that stick out two or three inches from their hair) made of diamonds, pearls, red, green, and yellow stones ; that it certainly requires as much art and experience to carry the load upright, as to dance upon May-day with the garland. Their whalebone petticoats outdo ours by several yards circumference, and cover some acres of ground. You may easily suppose how this extraordinary dress sets off and improves the natural ugliness, with which God Almighty has been pleased to endow them, generally speaking. Even the lovely empress herself is obliged to comply, in some degree, with these absurd fashions, which they would not quit for all the world. I had a private audience (according to ceremony) of half an hour, and then all the other ladies were permitted to come and make their court. I was perfectly charmed with the empress ; I cannot however tell you that her features are regular ; her eyes are not large, but have a lively look full of sweetness ; her complexion the finest I ever saw ; her nose and forehead well made, but her mouth has ten thousand charms, that touch the soul. When she smiles, it is with a beauty and sweetness that forces adoration. She has a vast quantity of fine fair hair ; but then her person !—one must speak of it poetically to do it rigid justice ; all that the poets have said of the mien of Juno, the air of Venus, come not up to the truth. The Graces move with her ; the famous statue of Medicis was not formed with more delicate proportions : nothing can be added to the beauty of her neck and hands. Till I saw them, I did not believe there were any in nature so perfect, and I was almost sorry that my rank here did not permit me to kiss them ; but they are kissed sufficiently, for every body that waits on her pays that homage at their entrance, and when they take leave. When the ladies were

come, she sat down to quize. I could not play at a game I had never seen before; and she ordered me a seat at her right hand, and had the goodness to talk to me very much, with that grace so natural to her. I expected every moment when the men were to come in to pay their court; but this drawing-room is very different from that of England; no man enters it but the grand master, who comes in to advertise the empress of the approach of the emperor. His imperial majesty did me the honour of speaking to me in a very obliging manner, but he never speaks to any of the other ladies, and the whole passes with a gravity and air of ceremony that has something very formal in it. The empress Amelia, dowager of the late emperor Joseph, came this evening to wait on the reigning empress, followed by the two archduchesses her daughters, who are very agreeable young princesses. Their imperial majesties rose and went to meet her at the door of the room, after which she was seated in an armed chair next the empress, and in the same manner at supper, and there the men had the permission of paying their court. The archduchesses sat on chairs with backs without arms. The table was entirely served, and all the dishes set on, by the empress's maids of honour, which are twelve young ladies of the first quality. They have no salary but their chamber at court, where they live in a sort of confinement, not being suffered to go to the assemblies or public places in town, except in compliment to the wedding of a sister-maid, whom the empress always presents with her picture set in diamonds. The three first of them are called Ladies of the Key, and wear gold keys by their sides; but what I find most pleasant is the custom, which obliges them as long as they live, after they have left the empress's service, to make her some present every year on the day of her feast. Her majesty is served by no married women but the *grande maîtresse*, who is generally a widow of the first quality, always very old, and is at the same time groom of the stole and mother of the maids. The dressers are not at all in the figure they pretend to in England, being looked upon no otherwise than as downright chambermaids. I had an audience next day of the empress mother, a princess of

great virtue and goodness, but who piques herself too much on a violent devotion. She is perpetually performing extraordinary acts of penance, without having ever done any thing to deserve them. She has the same number of maids of honour, whom she suffers to go in colours; but she herself never quits her mourning; and sure nothing can be more dismal than the mourning here, even for a brother. There is not the least bit of linen to be seen; all black crape instead of it. The neck, ears, and side of the face are covered with a plaited piece of the same stuff, and the face, that peeps out in the midst of it, looks as if it were pilloried. The widows wear, over and above, a crape forehead cloth, and in this solemn weed go to all the public places of diversion without scruple. The next day I was to wait on the empress Amelia, who is now at her palace of retirement, half a mile from the town. I had there the pleasure of seeing a diversion wholly new to me, but which is the common amusement of this court. The empress herself was seated on a little throne at the end of the fine alley in her garden, and on each side of her were ranged two parties of her ladies of quality, headed by two young arch-duchesses, all dressed in their hair, full of jewels, with fine light guns in their hands, and at proper distances were placed three oval pictures, which were the marks to be shot at. The first was that of a Cupid, filling a bumper of Burgundy, and the motto, "Tis easy to be valiant here." The second a Fortune holding a garland in her hand, the motto, "For her whom Fortune favours." The third was a sword with a laurel wreath on the point, the motto, "Here is no shame to the vanquished." Near the empress was a gilded trophy wreathed with flowers, and made of little crooks, on which were hung rich Turkish handkerchiefs, tippets, ribbons, laces, &c. for the small prizes. The empress gave the first with her own hand, which was a fine ruby ring set round with diamonds in a gold snuff-box. There was for the second, a little Cupid set with brilliants, and besides these a set of fine china for the tea-table, encased in gold, japan trunks, fans, and many gallantries of the same nature. All the men of quality at Vienna were spectators; but the ladies only had per-

mission to shoot, and the archduchess Amelia carried off the first prize. I was very well pleased with having seen this entertainment, and do not know but it might make as good a figure as the prize-shooting in the *Æneid*, if I could write as well as Virgil. This is the favourite pleasure of the emperor, and there is rarely a week without some feast of this kind, which makes the young ladies skilful enough to defend a fort. They laughed very much to see me afraid to handle a gun. My dear sister, you will easily pardon an abrupt conclusion. I believe by this time you are ready to think I shall never conclude at all.

LETTER LXIV.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady R—.

Vienna, Sept. 20, 1716, O. S.

I AM extremely rejoiced, but not at all surprised, at the long, delightful letter you have had the goodness to send me. I know that you can think of an absent friend even in the midst of a court, and you love to oblige, where you can have no view of a return; and I expect from you that you should love me, and think of me, when you do not see me. I have compassion for the mortifications, that you tell me befel our little old friend; and I pity her much more, since I know that they are only owing to the barbarous customs of our country. Upon my word, if she were here, she would have no other fault but that of being something too young for the fashion, and she has nothing to do but to transplant herself hither about seven years hence, to be again a young and blooming beauty. I can assure you that wrinkles, or a small stoop in the shoulders, nay even grey hairs, are no objection to the making new conquests. I know you cannot easily figure to yourself a young fellow of five-and-twenty ogling my lady S—ff—k with passion, or pressing to hand the countess of O——d from an opera. But such are the sights I see every day, and I do not perceive any body surprised at them but myself. A woman till five-and-thirty is only looked upon as a raw girl, and can possibly make no noise in the world till about forty. I do not know what your ladyship may think of this

matter, but it is a considerable comfort to me to know there is upon earth such a paradise for old women; and I am content to be insignificant at present, in the design of returning when I am fit to appear no where else. I cannot help lamenting on this occasion the pitiful case of too many English ladies, long since retired to prudery and ratifia, whom if their stars had luckily conducted hither, would still shine in the first rank of beauties.

LETTER LXV.

*From the same to Mrs J***.*

Vienna, Sept. 26, O. S. 1716.

I WAS never more agreeably surprised than by your obliging letter. It is a peculiar mark of my esteem, that I tell you so; and I can assure you, that if I loved you one grain less than I do, I should be very sorry to see it so diverting as it is. The mortal aversion I have to writing makes me tremble at the thoughts of a new correspondent; and I believe I disobliged no less than a dozen of my London acquaintance by refusing to hear from them, though I did verily think they intended to send me very entertaining letters. But I had rather lose the pleasure of reading several witty things, than be forced to write many stupid ones. Yet, in spite of these considerations, I am charmed with the proof of your friendship, and beg a continuation of the same goodness, though I fear the dulness of this will make you immediately repent of it. It is not from Austria that one can write with vivacity, and I am already infected with the phlegm of the country. Even their amours and their quarrels are carried on with a surprising temper, and they are never lively but upon points of ceremony. There, I own, they shew all their passions; and it is not long since two coaches meeting in a narrow street at night, the ladies in them not being able to adjust the ceremonial of which should go back, sat there with equal gallantry till two in the morning, and were both so fully determined to die upon the spot rather than yield, in a point of that importance, that the street would never have been cleared till their deaths, if the emperor had not sent his guards to part

them; and even then they refused to stir, till the expedient could be found out, of taking them both out in chairs, exactly in the same moment. After the ladies were agreed, it was with some difficulty that the *pas* was decided between the two coachmen, no less tenacious of their rank than the ladies. This passion is so omnipotent in the breasts of the women, that even their husbands never die, but they are ready to break their hearts, because that fatal hour puts an end to their rank, no widows having any place at Vienna. The men are not much less touched with this point of honour; and they do not only scorn to marry, but even to make love to any woman of a family not as illustrious as their own, and the pedigree is much more considered by them, than either the complexion or features of their mistresses. Happy are the shes that can number amongst their ancestors counts of the empire; they have neither occasion for beauty, money, nor good conduct to get them husbands. It is true, as to money, it is seldom any advantage to the man they marry; the laws of Austria confine the woman's portion to two thousand florins (about two hundred pounds English), and whatever they have beside, remains in their own possession and disposal. Thus here are many ladies much richer than their husbands, who are however obliged to allow them pin-money agreeable to their quality; and I attribute to this considerable branch of prerogative the liberty that they take upon other occasions. I am sure you, that know my laziness, and extreme indifference on this subject, will pity me, entangled amongst all these ceremonies, which are a wonderful burthen to me, though I am the envy of the whole town, having by their own customs the *pas* before them all. They, indeed, so revenge upon the poor envoys this great respect shewn to ambassadors, that (with all my indifference) I should be very uneasy to suffer it. Upon days of ceremony they have no entrance at court, and on other days must content themselves with walking after every soul, and being the very last taken notice of. But I must write a volume to let you know all the ceremonies, and I have already said too much on so dull a subject, which however employs the whole care of the people here. I need not, after

this, tell you how agreeably time slides away with me; you know as well as I do the taste of yours, &c. &c.

LETTER LXVI.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady X—

Vienna, Oct. 1, O. S. 1716.

You desire me, madam, to send you some account of the customs here, and at the same time a description of Vienna. I am always willing to obey your commands; but you must, upon this occasion, take the will for the deed. If I should undertake to tell you all the particulars in which the manners here differ from ours, I must write a whole quire of the dullest stuff that ever was read, or printed without being read. Their dress agrees with the French or English in no one article, but wearing petticoats. They have many fashions peculiar to themselves; they think it indecent for a widow ever to wear green or rose-colour, but all the other gayest colours at her own discretion. The assemblies here are the only regular diversion, the operas being always at court, and commonly on some particular occasion. Madam Rabutin has the assembly constantly every night at her house; and the other ladies, whenever they have a mind to display the magnificence of their apartments, or oblige a friend by complimenting them on the day of their saint, they declare, that on such a day the assembly shall be at their house in honour of the feast of the count or countess—such-a-one. These days are called days of gala, and all the friends or relations of the lady, whose saint it is, are obliged to appear in their best clothes and all their jewels. The mistress of the house takes no particular notice of any body, nor returns any body's visit; and, whoever pleases, may go, without the formality of being presented. The company are entertained with ice in several forms, winter and summer; afterwards they divide into several parties of ombre, piquet, or conversation, all games of hazard being forbid.

I saw the other day the gala for count Altheim, the emperor's favourite, and never in my life saw so many fine clothes ill-fancied. They embroider the richest gold stuffs; and provided they can make their clothes expensive enough, that is

all the taste they shew in them. On other days the general dress is a scarf, and what you please under it.

But now I am speaking of Vienna, I am sure you should expect I should say something of the convents: they are of all sorts and sizes; but I am best pleased with that of St. Lawrence, where the ease and neatness they seem to live with appear to me much more edifying than those stricter orders, where perpetual penance and nastinesses must breed discontent and wretchedness. The nuns are all of quality. I think there are to the number of fifty. They have each of them a little cell, perfectly clean, the walls of which are covered with pictures, more or less fine, according to their quality. A long white stone gallery runs by all of them, furnished with the pictures of exemplary sisters; the chapel is extremely neat and richly adorned. But I could not forbear laughing at their shewing me a wooden head of our Saviour, which they assured me spoke, during the siege of Vienna; and, as a proof of it, bid me remark his mouth, which had been open ever since. Nothing can be more becoming than the dress of these nuns. It is a white robe, the sleeves of which are turned up with fine white calico, and their head-dress the same, excepting a small veil of black crape that falls behind. They have a lower sort of serving nuns, that wait on them as their chamber-maids. They receive all visits of women, and play at ombre in their chambers, with permission of their abbess, which is very easy to be obtained. I never saw an old woman so good-natured; she is near fourscore, and yet shews very little sign of decay, being still lively and cheerful. She caressed me as if I had been her daughter, giving me some pretty things of her own work, and sweetmeats in abundance. The grate is not one of the most rigid; it is not very hard to put a head through; and I do not doubt but a man, a little more slender than ordinary, might squeeze in his whole person. The young count of Salamis came to the grate, while I was there, and the abbess gave him her hand to kiss. But I was surprised to find here the only beautiful young woman I have seen at Vienna, and not only beautiful, but genteel, witty, and agreeable, of a great family, and who had been the admiration of the

town. I could not forbear shewing my surprise at seeing a nun like her. She made me a thousand obliging compliments, and desired me to come often. "It will be an infinite pleasure to me (said she, sighing); but I avoid, with the greatest care, seeing any of my former acquaintance, and whenever they come to our convent, I lock myself in my cell." I observed tears come into her eyes, which touched me extremely, and I began to talk to her in that strain of tender pity she inspired me with; but she would not own to me that she is not perfectly happy. I have since endeavoured to learn the real cause of her retirement, without being able to get any other account, but that every body was surprised at it, and nobody guessed the reason. I have been several times to see her; but it gives me too much melancholy to see so agreeable a young creature buried alive. I am not surprised that nuns have so often inspired violent passions; the pity one naturally feels for them, when they seem worthy of another destiny, making an easy way for yet more tender sentiments. I never in my life had so little charity for the Roman Catholic religion as since I see the misery it occasions; so many poor unhappy women! and then the gross superstition of the common people, who are, some or other of them, day and night offering bits of candle to the wooden figures, that are set up almost in every street. The processions I see very often are a pageantry, as offensive and apparently contradictory to common sense as the pagods of China. God knows whether it be the womanly spirit of contradiction that works in me, but there never, before, was such zeal against popery in the heart of, dear madam, &c. &c.

LETTER LXVII.

From the same to Mr. —.

Vienna, Oct. 16, O. S. 1716.

I DESERVE not all the reproaches you make me. If I have been some time without answering your letter, it is not that I do not know how many thanks are due to you for it, or that I am stupid enough to prefer any amusements to the pleasure of hearing from you; but after the professions of esteem you have so

obligingly made me, I cannot help delaying, as long as I can, shewing you that you are mistaken. If you are sincere, when you say you expect to be extremely entertained by my letters, I ought to be mortified at the disappointment that I am sure you will receive when you hear from me; though I have done my best endeavours to find out something worth writing to you. I have seen every thing that was to be seen, with a very diligent curiosity. Here are some fine villas, particularly the late prince of Lichtenstein's; but the statues are all modern, and the pictures not of the first hands. It is true, the emperor has some of great value. I was yesterday to see the repository, which they call his Treasure, where they seem to have been more diligent in amassing a great quantity of things, than in the choice of them. I spent above five hours there, and yet there were very few things that stopped me long to consider them. But the number is prodigious, being a very long gallery filled on both sides, and five large rooms. There is a vast quantity of paintings, amongst which are many fine miniatures; but the most valuable pictures are a few of Corregio, those of Titian being at the Favorita.

The cabinet of jewels did not appear to me so rich as I expected to see it. They shewed me there a cup, about the size of a tea-dish, of one entire emerald, which they had so particular a respect for, that only the emperor has the liberty of touching it. There is a large cabinet full of curiosities of clock-work, only one of which I thought worth observing, that was a craw-fish, with all the motions so natural that it was hard to distinguish it from the life.

The next cabinet was a large collection of agates, some of them extremely beautiful and of uncommon size, and several vases of lapis lazuli. I was surprised to see the cabinet of medals so poorly furnished; I did not remark one of any value, and they are kept in a most ridiculous disorder. As to the antiques, very few of them deserve that name. Upon my saying they were modern, I could not forbear laughing at the answer of the profound antiquary that shewed them, that they were ancient enough, for to his knowledge they had been there these forty years; but the next cabinet diverted me yet better, being nothing

else but a parcel of wax babies, and toys in ivory, very well worthy to be presented children of five years old. Two of the rooms were wholly filled with these trifles of all kinds, set in jewels, amongst which I was desired to observe a crucifix, that they assured me had spoke very wisely to the emperor Leopold. I will not trouble you with a catalogue of the rest of the lumber, but I must not forget to mention a small piece of loadstone, that held up an anchor of steel too heavy for me to lift. This is what I thought most curious in the whole treasure. There are some few heads of ancient statues; but several of them are defaced by modern additions. I foresee that you will be very little satisfied with this letter; and I dare hardly ask you to be good-natured enough to charge the dulness of it on the barrenness of the subject, and to overlook the stupidity of your, &c. &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of —.

Prague, Nov. 17, O.S. 1716.

I HOPE my dear sister wants no new proof of my sincere affection for her; but I am sure if you do, I could not give you a stronger than writing at this time, after three days, or, more properly speaking, three nights and days, hard post-travelling.—The kingdom of Bohemia is the most desert of any I have seen in Germany. The villages are so poor, and the post-houses so miserable, that clean straw and fair water are blessings not always to be met with, and better accommodation not to be hoped for. Though I carried my own bed with me, I could not sometimes find a place to set it up in; and I rather chose to travel all night, as cold as it is, wrapped up in my furs, than go into the common stoves, which are filled with a mixture of all sorts of ill scents.

This town was once the royal seat of the Bohemian king, and is still the capital of the kingdom. There are yet some remains of its former splendour, being one of the largest towns in Germany, but, for the most part, old built and thinly inhabited, which makes the houses very cheap. Those people of

quality, who cannot easily bear the expense of Vienna, choose to reside here, where they have assemblies, music, and all other diversions (those of a court excepted), at very moderate rates, all things here being in great abundance, especially the best wild-fowl I ever tasted. I have already been visited by some of the most considerable ladies, whose relations I know at Vienna. They are dressed after the fashions there, after the manner that the people at Exeter imitate those of London: that is, their imitation is more excessive than the original. It is not easy to describe what extraordinary figures they make. The person is so much lost between head-dress and petticoat, that they have as much occasion to write upon their backs, "This is a woman," for the information of travellers, as ever sign-post painter had to write, "This is a bear." I will not forget to write to you again from Dresden and Leipzig, being much more solicitous to content your curiosity, than to indulge my own repose. I am, &c.

LETTER LXIX.

From the same to the same.

Leipzig, Nov. 21, O. S. 1716.

I BELIEVE, dear sister, you will easily forgive my not writing to you from Dresden, as I promised, when I tell you, that I never went out of my chaise from Prague to this place. You may imagine how heartily I was tired with twenty-four hours post-travelling, without sleep or refreshment (for I can never sleep in a coach, however fatigued). We passed by moonshine the frightful precipices that divide Bohemia from Saxony, at the bottom of which runs the river Elbe; but I cannot say that I had reason to fear drowning in it, being perfectly convinced, that in case of a tumble, it was utterly impossible to come alive to the bottom. In many places the road is so narrow, that I could not discern an inch of space between the wheels and the precipice. Yet I was so good a wife not to wake Mr. W——y, who was fast asleep by my side, to make him share in my fears, since the danger was unavoidable, till I perceived, by the bright light of the moon, our postillions nodding on horseback, while the horses

were on the full gallop. Then indeed I thought it very convenient to call out to desire them to look where they were going. My calling waked Mr. W——y, and he was much more surprised than myself at the situation we were in, and assured me, that he passed the Alps five times in different places, without ever having gone a road so dangerous. I have been told since, that it is common to find the bodies of travellers in the Elbe; but, thank God, that was not our destiny, and we came safe to Dresden, so much tired with fear and fatigue, it was not possible for me to compose myself to write. After passing these dreadful rocks, Dresden appeared to me a wonderfully agreeable situation, in a fine large plain on the banks of the Elbe. I was very glad to stay there a day to rest myself. The town is the neatest I have seen in Germany; most of the houses are new built; the elector's palace is very handsome, and his repository full of curiosities of different kinds, with a collection of medals very much esteemed. Sir ——, our king's envoy, came to see me here, and madam de L——, whom I knew in London, when her husband was minister to the king of Poland there. She offered me all things in her power to entertain me, and brought some ladies with her, whom she presented to me. The Saxon ladies resemble the Austrian no more than the Chinese do those of London; they are very genteelly dressed after the English and French modes, and have, generally, pretty faces, but they are the most determined *minaudieres* in the whole world; they would think it a mortal sin against good-breeding, if they either spoke or moved in a natural manner. They all affect a little soft lisp, and a pretty pitty-pat step; which female frailties ought, however, to be forgiven them, in favour of their civility and good-nature to strangers, which I have a great deal of reason to praise.

The countess of Cozelle is kept prisoner in a melancholy castle, some leagues from hence; and I cannot forbear telling you what I have heard of her, because it seems to me very extraordinary, though I foresee I shall swell my letter to the size of a packet.—She was mistress to the king of Poland (elector of Saxony), with so absolute a dominion over him, that never any lady had so much power

in that court. They tell a pleasant story of his majesty's first declaration of love, which he made in a visit to her, bringing in one hand a bag of a hundred thousand crowns, and in the other a horse-shoe, which he snapped asunder before her face, leaving her to draw the consequences of such remarkable proofs of strength and liberality. I know not which charmed her most, but she consented to leave her husband, and to give herself up to him entirely, being divorced publicly in such a manner as by their laws permits either party to marry again. God knows whether it was at this time, or in some other fond fit, but it is certain the king had the weakness to make her a formal contract of marriage; which, though it could signify nothing during the life of the queen, pleased her so well, that she could not be contented without telling it to all the people she saw, and giving herself the airs of a queen. Men endure every thing while they are in love; but when the excess of passion was cooled by long possession, his majesty began to reflect on the ill consequences of leaving such a paper in her hands, and desired to have it restored him. But she rather chose to endure all the most violent effects of his anger than give it up; and though she is one of the richest and most avaricious ladies of her country, she has refused the offer of the continuation of a large pension, and the security of a vast sum of money she has amassed, and has at last provoked the king to confine her person to a castle, where she endures all the terrors of a strait imprisonment, and remains still inflexible either to threats or promises. Her violent passions have brought her indeed into fits; which it is supposed will soon put an end to her life. I cannot forbear having some compassion for a woman that suffers for a point of honour, however mistaken, especially in a country where points of honour are not over scrupulously observed among ladies.

I could have wished Mr. W——y's business had permitted him a longer stay at Dresden.

Perhaps I am partial to a town where they profess the Protestant religion, but every thing seemed to me with quite another way of politeness than I have found in other places. *Leipsic*, where I am at present, is a town very considerable for its trade, and I take this oppor-

tunity of buying pages' liveries, gold stuffs for myself, &c.; all things of that kind being at least double the price at Vienna, partly because of the excessive customs, and partly through want of genius and industry in the people, who make no one sort of thing there, so that the ladies are obliged to send even for their shoes out of Saxony. The fair here is one of the most considerable in Germany, and the resort of all the people of quality, as well as of the merchants. This is also a fortified town; but I avoid ever mentioning fortifications, being sensible that I know not how to speak of them. I am the more easy under my ignorance, when I reflect that I am sure you will willingly forgive the omission; for if I made you the most exact description of all the ravelins and bastions I see in my travels, I dare swear you will ask me what is a ravelin? and what is a bastion? Adieu, my dear sister.

LETTER LXX.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of —.

Brunswick, Nov. 23, O. S. 1716.

I AM just come to Brunswick, a very old town, but which has the advantage of being the capital of the duke of Wolfenbuttle's dominions, a family (not to speak of its ancient honours) illustrious, by having its younger branch on the throne of England, and having given two empresses to Germany. I have not forgot to drink your health here in mum, which I think very well deserves its reputation of being the best in the world. This letter is the third I have writ to you during my journey; and I declare to you, that if you do not send me immediately a full and true account of all the changes and chances amongst our London acquaintance, I will not write you any description of Hanover (where I hope to be to-night), though I know you have more curiosity to hear of that place than any other.

LETTER LXXI.

From the same to the Countess of B.

Hanover, Nov. 25, O. S. 1716.

I RECEIVED your ladyship's letter but the day before I left Vienna, though,

by the date, I ought to have had it much sooner; but nothing was ever worse regulated than the post in most parts of Germany. I can assure you, the packet at Prague was behind my chaise, and in that manner conveyed to Dresden, so that the secrets of half the country were at my mercy, if I had had any curiosity for them. I would not longer delay my thanks for yours, though the number of my acquaintances here, and my duty of attending at court, leave me hardly any time to dispose of. I am extremely pleased that I can tell you, without flattery or partiality, that our young prince has all the accomplishments that it is possible to have at his age, with an air of sprightliness and understanding, and something so very engaging and easy in his behaviour, that he needs not the advantage of his rank to appear charming. I had the honour of a long conversation with him last night, before the king came in. His governor retired on purpose (as he told me afterwards) that I might make some judgment of his genius, by hearing him speak without constraint; and I was surprised at the quickness and politeness that appeared in every thing he said, joined to a person perfectly agreeable, and the fine fair hair of the princess.

This town is neither large nor handsome: but the palace is capable of holding a much greater court than that of St. James's. The king has had the goodness to appoint us a lodging in one part of it, without which we should have been very ill accommodated; for the vast number of English crowds the town so much, it is very good luck to get one sorry room in a miserable tavern. I dined to-day with the Portuguese ambassador, who thinks himself very happy to have two wretched parlours in an inn. I have now made the tour of Germany, and cannot help observing a considerable difference between travelling here and in England. One sees none of those fine seats of noblemen, so common among us, nor any thing like a country-gentleman's house, though they have many situations perfectly fine. But the whole people are divided into absolute sovereignties, where all the riches and magnificence are at court, or into communities of merchants, such as Nuremberg and Frankfort, where they live always in town for the convenience of trade. The king's company

of French comedians play here every night. They are very well dressed, and some of them not ill actors. His majesty dines and sups constantly in public. The court is very numerous, and his affability and goodness make it one of the most agreeable places in the world. Dear madam, your L. &c. &c.

LETTER LXXII.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady R—.

Hanover, Oct. 1, O. S. 1716.

I AM very glad, my dear lady R—, that you have been so well pleased, as you tell me, at the report of my returning to England; though, like other pleasures, I can assure you it has no real foundation. I hope you know me enough to take my word against any report concerning me. It is true, as to distance of place, I am much nearer to London than I was some weeks ago; but as to the thoughts of a return, I never was farther off in my life. I own, I could with great joy indulge the pleasing hopes of seeing you and the very few others that share my esteem; but while Mr. W— is determined to proceed in his design, I am determined to follow him. I am running on upon my own affairs, that is to say, I am going to write very dully, as most people do when they write of themselves. I will make haste to change the disagreeable subject, by telling you, that I am now got into the region of beauty. All the women have, literally, rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. Those perfections never leave them till the hour of their deaths, and have a very fine effect by candle-light; but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one another as much as Mrs. Salmon's court of Great Britain, and are in as much danger of melting away, by too near approaching the fire, which they, for that reason, carefully avoid, though it is now such excessive cold weather, that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial. The snow is already very deep, and the people begin to slide about in their *traineaus*. This is a favourite diversion all over Germany. They are little machines fixed upon a sledge, that

hold a lady and a gentleman, and are drawn by one horse. The gentleman has the honour of driving, and they move with a prodigious swiftness. The lady, the horse, and the *traineau*, are all as fine as they can be made; and when there are many of them together, it is a very agreeable show. At Vienna, where all pieces of magnificence are carried to excess, there are sometimes machines of this kind, that cost five or six hundred pounds English. The duke of Wolfenbuttle is now at this court: you know he is nearly related to our king, and uncle to the reigning empress, who is, I believe, the most beautiful princess upon earth. She is now with child, which is all the consolation of the imperial court for the loss of the archduke. I took my leave of her the day before I left Vienna, and she began to speak to me with so much grief and tenderness of the death of that young prince, I had much ado to withhold my tears. You know that I am not at all partial to people for their titles; but I own that I love that charming princess (if I may use so familiar an expression); and if I had not, I should have been very much moved at the tragical end of an only son, born after being so long desired, and at length killed by want of good management, weaning him in the beginning of the winter. Adieu, dear lady R——, continue to write to me, and believe none of your goodness is lost upon your, &c.

LETTER LXXIII.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of —.

Blankenburgh, Oct. 17, O. S. 1716.

I RECEIVED yours, dear sister, the very day I left Hanover. You may easily imagine I was then in too great a hurry to answer it; but you see I take the first opportunity of doing myself that pleasure. I came here the 15th, very late at night, after a terrible journey, in the worst roads and weather that ever poor traveller suffered. I have taken this little fatigue, merely to oblige the reigning empress, and carry a message from her imperial majesty to the duchess of Blankenburgh, her mother, who is a princess of great address and good-breeding, and may be still called a fine woman. It was so late when I came to this town, I did

not think it proper to disturb the duke and duchess with the news of my arrival; so I took up my quarters in a miserable inn; but as soon as I had sent my compliments to their highnesses, they immediately sent me their own coach and six horses, which had however enough to do to draw us up the very high hill on which the castle is situated. The duchess is extremely obliging to me, and this little court is not without its diversions. The duke *taillys at basnet* every night, and the duchess tells me, she is so well pleased with my company, that it makes her play less than she used to do. I should find it very difficult to steal time to write, if she was not now at church, where I cannot wait on her, not understanding the language enough to pay my devotions in it. You will not forgive me, if I do not say something of Hanover: I cannot tell you that the town is either large or magnificent. The opera house, which was built by the late elector, is much finer than that of Vienna. I was very sorry that the ill weather did not permit me to see Hernhausen in all its beauty; but, in spite of the snow, I thought the gardens very fine. I was particularly surprised at the vast number of orange trees, much larger than any I have ever seen in England, though this climate is certainly colder. But I had more reason to wonder, that night, at the king's table, to see a present from a gentleman of this country, of two large baskets full of ripe oranges and lemons of different sorts, many of which were quite new to me; and what I thought worth all the rest, two ripe *ananasses*, which, to my taste, are a fruit perfectly delicious. You know they are naturally the growth of Brazil, and I could not imagine how they came here but by enchantment. Upon inquiry, I learnt that they have brought their stoves to such perfection, they lengthen their summer as long as they please, giving to every plant the degree of heat it would receive from the sun in its native soil. The effect is very near the same; I am surprised we do not practise, in England, so useful an invention. This reflection leads me to consider our obstinacy in shaking with cold, five months in the year, rather than make use of stoves, which are certainly one of the greatest conveniences of life. Besides, they are so far from spoiling the form of a room,

that they add very much to the magnificence of it, when they are painted and gilt, as they are at Vienna, or at Dresden, where they are often in the shapes of China jars, statues, or fine cabinets, so naturally represented, that they are not to be distinguished. If ever I return, in defiance to the fashion, you shall certainly see one in the chamber of, dear sister, your, &c.

I will write often, since you desire it; but I must beg you to be a little more particular in yours; you fancy me at forty miles distance, and forget, that, after so long an absence, I cannot understand hints.

LETTER LXXIV.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady —.

Vienna, Jan. 1, O. S. 1717.

I HAVE just received here, at Vienna, your ladyship's compliments on my return to England, sent me from Hanover. You see, madam, all things that are asserted with confidence are not absolutely true; and that you have no sort of reason to complain of me for making my designed return a mystery to you, when you say all the world are informed of it. You may tell all the world in my name, that they are never so well informed of my affairs as I am myself, that I am very positive I am at this time at Vienna, where the carnival is begun, and all sorts of diversions are carried to the greatest height, except that of masquing, which is never permitted during a war with the Turks. The balls are in public places, where the men pay a gold ducat at entrance, but the ladies nothing. I am told that these houses get sometimes a thousand ducats in a night. They are very magnificently furnished, and the music good, if they had not that detestable custom of mixing hunting-horns with it, that almost deafen the company. But that noise is so agreeable here, they never make a concert without them. The ball always concludes with English country-dances, to the number of thirty or forty couple, and so ill danced, that there is very little pleasure in them. They know but half a dozen, and they have danced them over and over these fifty years. I would fain have taught them some new ones, but I found it would be some months' labour to make them comprehend them. Last night

there was an Italian comedy acted at court. The scenes were pretty, but the comedy itself such intolerable low farce, without either wit or humour, that I was surprised how all the court could sit there attentively for four hours together. No women are suffered to act on the stage, and the men dressed like them were such awkward figures, they very much added to the ridicule of the spectacle. What completed the diversion was the excessive cold, which was so great I thought I should have died there. It is now the very extremity of the winter here; the Danube is entirely frozen, and the weather not to be supported without stoves and furs; but, however, the air so clear, almost every body is well, and colds not half so common as in England. I am persuaded there cannot be a purer air, nor more wholesome, than that of Vienna. The plenty and excellence of all sorts of provisions are greater here than in any place I ever was before, and it is not very expensive to keep a splendid table. It is really a pleasure to pass through the markets, and see the abundance of what we should think rarities, of fowls and venison, that are daily brought in from Hungary and Bohemia. They want nothing but shell-fish, and are so fond of oysters, that they have them sent from Venice, and eat them very greedily, stink or not stink. Thus I obey your commands, madam, in giving you an account of Vienna, though I know you will not be satisfied with it. You chide me for my laziness in not telling you a thousand agreeable and surprising things, that you say you are sure I have seen and heard. Upon my word, madam, it is my regard to truth, and not laziness, that I do not entertain you with as many prodigies as other travellers use to divert their readers with. I might easily pick up wonders in every town I pass through, or tell you a long series of popish miracles; but I cannot fancy that there is any thing new in letting you know, that priests will lie, and the mob believe, all the world over. Then as for news, that you are so inquisitive about, how can it be entertaining to you (that do not know the people), that the prince of — has forsaken the countess of —? or that the princess such-a-one has an intrigue with count such-a-one? Would you have me write

novels like the countess of D'———? and is it not better to tell you a plain truth, that I am, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. Pope.

Vienna, Jan. 16, O. S. 1717.

I HAVE not time to answer your letter, being in all the hurry of preparing for my journey; but I think I ought to bid adieu to my friends with the same solemnity as if I was going to mount a breach, at least, if I am to believe the information of the people here, who denounce all sorts of terrors to me; and, indeed, the weather is at present such, as very few ever set out in. I am threatened, at the same time, with being frozen to death, buried in the snow, and taken by the Tartars, who ravage that part of Hungary I am to pass. It is true, we shall have a considerable *escorte*, so that possibly I may be diverted with a new scene, by finding myself in the midst of a battle. How my adventures will conclude, I leave entirely to Providence; if comically, you shall hear of them.—Pray be so good as to tell Mr. —— I have received his letter. Make him my adieus; if I live, I will answer it. The same compliment to my lady R——.

LETTER LXXVI.

*Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. Chenevix,
Lord Bishop of Waterford.*

London, Dec. 16, 1760.

My dear lord,

I MAKE no excuses for the irregularity of my correspondence, or the unfrequency of my letters; for my declining mind keeps pace with my decaying body, and I can no more *scribere digna legi* (write things worthy to be read), than I can *facere digna scribi* (do things worthy to be written). My health is always bad, though sometimes better, and sometimes worse, but never good. My deafness increases, and consequently deprives me of the comforts of society, which other people have in their illnesses; in short, this last stage of my life is a very tedious one, and the roads very bad; the

end of it cannot be very far off, and I cannot be sorry for it. I wait for it, imploring the mercy of my Creator, and deprecating his justice. The best of us must trust to the former, and dread the latter. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

From the same to the same.

Blackheath, Sept. 12, 1761.

My dear lord,

I DO not know whether I shall give you a reason which you will reckon a good one; but I will honestly give you the true one, for my writing so seldom. It is one of the effects, and not the least disagreeable one, of my disorder, to make one indolent, and unwilling to undertake even what one has a mind to do. I have often set down in the intention of writing to you, when the apparatus of a table, pen, ink, and paper, has discouraged me, and made me procrastinate, and say, like Festus, "At a convenient time will I speak to thee." Those who have not experienced this indolence and languor, I know have no conception of them; and therefore, many people say that I am extremely well, because I can walk and speak, without knowing how much it costs me to do either. This was the case of the bishop of Ossory, who reported only from my outside, which is not much altered. I cannot say, however, that I am positively ill; but I can positively say, that I am always *unwell*. In short, I am in my health, what many, reckoned in the main good sort of people, are in their morals; they commit no flagrant crimes, but their conscience secretly reproaches them with the non-observance or the violation of many lesser duties. White is recovered from his acute illness, and is now only infirm and crazy, and will be so as long as he lives. I believe we shall start fair.

The bishop of Ossory told me one thing, that I heard with great pleasure; which was, that your son did extremely well at the university, and answered, not only your hopes, but your wishes; I sincerely congratulate you upon it.

The town of London and the city of Westminster are gone quite mad with the wedding and the approaching coronation. People think nor talk of no-

thing else. For my part, I have not seen our new queen yet; and as for the coronation, I am not alive enough to march, nor dead enough to *walk* at it. You can bear now and then a quibble, I hope; but I am, without the least *équivoque*, my dear lord, your most faithful friend, and humble servant.

P. S. Your lord lieutenant will be with you immediately after the coronation. He has heard of combinations, confederations, and all sorts of *ations*, to handcuff and fetter him; but he seems not in the least apprehensive of them.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Blackheath, Oct. 1, 1761.

My dear lord,

I HAVE been a long time in your debt, but I hope that my age and infirmities give me some privileges to compensate a little for the loss of youth and health. I am past the age at which a Roman soldier was *rude donatus*, which some have translated, *given to be rude*. I adopt that version. Since your friendship for me makes you solicitous to have accounts of my health, I will tell you that I am neither better nor worse than when you heard from me last. I am never free from physical ills of one kind or another, but use and patience make them supportable; and I own this obligation to them, that they have cured me of worse ills than themselves. I mean moral ills; for they have given me leisure to examine and reflection to subdue, all my passions. I think only of doing my duty to my Creator, and to my fellow-created beings, and *omnis in hoc sum* (this is my only object).

Are you a grandfather in embryo yet? That ought by this time to be manifest. When you shall be really so, may your grandchildren give you as much satisfaction as your own children have done!

Good night, my dear lord; I am most affectionately yours.

LETTER LXXIX.

From the same to the same.

London, Dec. 10, 1771.

My dear lord,

I AM sure you will believe me when I tell you that I am sincerely sorry for your loss, which I received the account of yesterday, and upon which I shall make you none of the trite compliments of condolence. Your grief is just; but your religion, of which I am sure you have enough (with the addition of some philosophy), will make you keep it within due bounds, and leave the rest to time and avocations. When your son was with me here, just before he embarked for France, I plainly saw that his consumption was too far gone to leave the least hopes of a cure; and, if he had dragged on this wretched life some few years longer, that life could have been but trouble and sorrow to you both. This consideration alone should mitigate your grief, and the care of your grandson will be a proper avocation from it. Adieu, my dear lord. May this stroke of adversity be the last you may ever experience from the hand of Providence!

Yours most affectionately and sincerely, &c.

LETTER LXXX.

Dr. Swift to the Earl of Chesterfield.

November 10, 1730.

My lord,

I WAS positively advised by a friend, whose opinion has much weight with me, and who has a great veneration for your lordship, to venture a letter of solicitation: and it is the first request of this kind that I ever made since the public changes, in times, persons, measures, and opinions, drove me into distance and obscurity.

There is an honest man, whose name is Launcelot; he has been long a servant to my lord Sussex: he married a relation of mine, a widow, with a tolerable jointure; which depending upon a lease which the duke of Grafton suffered to expire about three years ago, sunk half her little fortune. Mr. Launcelot had many promises from the duke of Dorset, while his grace held that office which is

now in your lordship ; but they all failed, after the usual fate that the bulk of court-suitors must expect.

I am very sensible that I have no manner of claim to the least favour from your lordship, whom I have hardly the honour to be known to, although you were always pleased to treat me with much humanity, and with more distinction than I could pretend to deserve. I am likewise conscious of that demerit which I have largely shared with all those who concerned themselves in a court and ministry, whose maxims and proceedings have been ever since so much exploded. But your lordship will grant me leave to say, that, in those times, when any persons of the ejected party came to court, and were of tolerable consequence, they never failed to succeed in any reasonable request they made for a friend. And, when I sometimes added my poor solicitations, I used to quote the then ministers a passage in the Gospel, *the poor* (meaning their own dependants) *you have always with you, &c.*

This is the strongest argument I have, to entreat your lordship's favour for Mr. Launcelot, who is a perfect honest man, and as loyal as you could wish. His wife, my near relation, has been my favourite from her youth, and as deserving as it is possible for one of her level. It is understood, that some little employments about the court may be often in your lordship's disposal ; and that my lord Sussex will give Mr. Launcelot the character he deserves ; and then let my petition be (to speak in my own trade) a drop in the bucket.

Remember, my lord, that although this letter be long, yet what particularly concerns my request is but of a few lines.

I shall not congratulate with your lordship upon any of your present great employments, or upon the greatest that can possibly be given to you ; because you are one of those very few, who do more honour to a court than you can possibly receive from it, which I take to be a greater compliment to a court than it is to your lordship. I am, my lord, &c.

LETTER LXXXI.

The Earl of Chesterfield to Dr. Swift,

Hague, Dec. 15, N. S. 1730.

Sir,

You need not have made any excuse to me for your solicitation : on the contrary, I am proud of being the first person to whom you have thought it worth the while to apply since those changes, which, you say, drove you into distance and obscurity. I very well know the person you recommend to me, having lodged at his house a whole summer at Richmond. I have always heard a very good character of him, which alone would incline me to serve him ; but your recommendation, I can assure you, will make me impatient to do it. However, that he may not again meet with the common fate of court suitors, nor I lie under the imputation of making court promises, I will exactly explain to you how far it is likely I may be able to serve him.

When first I had this office, I took the resolution of turning out nobody ; so that I shall only have the disposal of those places that the death of the present possessors will procure me. Some old servants, that have served me long and faithfully, have obtained the promises of the first four or five vacancies ; and the early solicitations of some of my particular friends have tied me down for about as many more. But after having satisfied these engagements, I do assure you Mr. Launcelot shall be my first care. I confess his prospect is more remote than I could have wished it ; but, as it is so remote, he will not have the uneasiness of a disappointment, if he gets nothing ; and if he gets something, we shall both be pleased.

As for his political principles, I am in no manner of pain about them. Were he a Tory, I would venture to serve him, in the just expectation, that, should I ever be charged with having preferred a Tory, the person who was the author of my crime would likewise be the author of my vindication. I am, with real esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant.

LETTER LXXXII.

Dean Swift to the Earl of Chesterfield.

January 15, 1730-1.

My lord,

I RETURN your lordship my most humble thanks for the honour and favour of your letter, and desire your justice to believe, that, in writing to you a second time, I have no design of giving you a second trouble. My only end at present is to beg your pardon for a fault of ignorance. I ought to have remembered, that the arts of courts are like those of play; where, if the most expert be absent a few months, the whole system is so changed, that he hath no more skill than a new beginner. Yet I cannot but wish, that your lordship had pleased to forgive one, who has been an utter stranger to public life above sixteen years. Bussy Rabutin himself, the politest person of his age, when he was recalled to court after a long banishment, appeared ridiculous there: and what could I expect from my antiquated manner of addressing your lordship in the prime of your life, in the height of fortune, favour, and merit; so distinguished by your active spirit, and greatness of your genius? I do here repeat to your lordship, that I lay the fault of my misconduct entirely on a friend whom I exceedingly love and esteem, whom I dare not name, and who is as bad a courtier by nature as I am grown by want of practice. God forbid that your lordship should continue in an employment, however great and honourable, where you only can be an ornament to the court so long, until you have an opportunity to provide offices for a dozen low people, like the poor man whom I took the liberty to mention! And God forbid, that, in one particular branch of the king's family, there should ever be such a mortality as to take away a dozen of meaner servants in less than a dozen years!

Give me leave, in further excuse of my weakness, to confess, that, besides some hints from my friends, your lordship is in great measure to blame, for your obliging manner of treating me in every place where I had the honour to see you; which I acknowledge to have been a distinction that I had not the least pretence to, and consequently as little to ground upon it the request of a favour.

As I am an utter stranger to the present forms of the world, I have imagined more than once, that your lordship's proceeding with me may be a refinement introduced by yourself; and that as, in my time, the most solemn and frequent promises of great men usually failed, against all probable appearances, so that single slight one of your lordship may, by your generous nature, early succeed against all visible impossibilities. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Lord Chesterfield to Sir Thomas Robinson, Bart.

Blackheath, Oct. 13, 1756.

Sir,

WHAT can a hermit send you from hence, in return for your entertaining letter, but his thanks? I see nobody here by choice, and I hear nobody by necessity. As for the contemplations of a deaf, solitary, sick man, I am sure they cannot be entertaining to a man in health and spirits, as I hope you are. Since I saw you I have not had one hour's health: the returns of my vertiges, and subsequent weaknesses and languors, grow both stronger and more frequent; and, in short, I exist to no one good purpose of life; and therefore do not care how soon so useless and tiresome an existence ceases entirely. This wretched situation makes me read with the utmost coolness and indifference the accounts in the newspapers, for they are my only informers now you are gone, of the wars abroad, and changes at home. I wish well to my species in general, and to my country in particular; and therefore lament the havoc that is already made, and likely to be made of the former, and the inevitable ruin which I see approaching by great strides to the latter: but, I confess, those sensations are not so quick in me now as formerly; long illness blunts them, as well as others; and perhaps too, self-love being now out of the case, I do not feel so sensibly for others as I should do if that were more concerned. This I know is wrong, but I fear it is nature.

Since you are your own steward, do not cheat yourself, for I have known many a man lose more by being his own

steward than he would have been robbed of by any other ; tenants are always too hard for landlords, especially such landlords as think they understand those matters and do not, which, with submission, may possibly be your case.

I go next week to the Bath, by orders of the skilful, which I obey, because all places are alike to me ; otherwise, I expect no advantage from it. But in all places I shall be most faithfully yours.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. Cheyne of Bath.

London, April 20, 1742.

Dear doctor,

YOUR inquiries and advice concerning my health are very pleasing marks of your remembrance and friendship ; which I assure you I value as I ought. It is very true, I have during these last three months, had frequent returns of my giddinesses, languors, and other nervous symptoms, for which I have taken vomits ; the first did me good, the others rather disagreed with me. It is the same with my diet ; sometimes the lowest agrees, at other times disagrees with me. In short, after all the attention and observation I am capable of, I can hardly say what does me good, and what not. My constitution conforms itself so much to the fashion of the times, that it changes almost daily its friends for its enemies, and its enemies for its friends. Your alkalisèd mercury and your Burgundy have proved its two most constant friends. I take them both now, and with more advantage than any other medicine. I propose going to Spa as soon as the season will permit, having really received great benefit by those waters last year, and I find my shattered tenement admits of but half repairs, and requires them annually.

The *corpus sanum*, which you wish me, will never be my lot ; but the *mens sana* I hope will be continued to me, and then I shall better bear the infirmities of the body. Hitherto, far from impairing my reason, they have only made me more reasonable, by subduing the tumultuous and troublesome passions. I enjoy my friends and my books as much as ever, and I seek for no other enjoyments ; so that I am become a perfect philosopher ; but whether *malgré moi* or no, I will not

take upon me to determine, not being sure that we do not owe more of our merit to accidents than our pride and self-love are willing to ascribe to them.

I read with great pleasure your book, which your bookseller sent me according to your directions. The physical part is extremely good, and the metaphysical part may be so too, for what I know ; and I believe it is ; for, as I look upon all metaphysics to be guess-work of imagination, I know no imagination likelier to hit upon the right than yours ; and I will take your guess against any other metaphysician's whatsoever. That part, which is founded upon knowledge and experience, I look upon as a work of public utility ; and for which, the present age and their posterity may be obliged to you, if they will be pleased to follow it.

LETTER LXXXV.

John Dunning, Esq. to a Gentleman of the Inner Temple ; containing Directions to the Student.

Lincoln's Inn, March 3, 1779.

Dear sir,

THE habits of intercourse in which I have lived with your family, joined to the regard which I entertain for yourself, make me solicitous, in compliance with your request, to give you some hints concerning the study of the law.

Our profession is generally ridiculed as being dry and uninteresting ; but a mind anxious for the discovery of truth and information will be amply gratified for the toil, in investigating the origin and progress of a jurisprudence, which has the good of the people for its basis, and the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages for its improvement. Nor is the study itself so intricate as has been imagined ; more especially since the labours of some modern writers have given it a more regular and scientific form. Without industry, however, it is impossible to arrive at any eminence in practice ; and the man who shall be bold enough to attempt excellence by abilities alone, will soon find himself foiled by many who have inferior understandings, but better attainments. On the other hand, the most painful plodder can never arrive at celebrity by mere reading ; a

man calculated for success must add to native genius an instinctive faculty in the discovery and retention of that knowledge only, which can be at once useful and productive.

I imagine that a considerable degree of learning is absolutely necessary. The elder authors frequently wrote in Latin, and the foreign jurists continue the practice to this day. Besides this, classical attainments contribute much to the refinement of the understanding, and embellishment of the style. The utility of grammar, rhetoric, and logic, are known and felt by every one. Geometry will afford the most apposite examples of close and pointed reasoning; and geography is so very necessary in common life, that there is less credit in knowing, than dishonour in being unacquainted with it. But it is history, and more particularly that of his own country, which will occupy the attention, and attract the regard of the great lawyer. A minute knowledge of the political revolutions and judicial decisions of our predecessors, whether in the more ancient or modern æras of our government, is equally useful and interesting. This will include a narrative of all the material alterations in the common law, and the reasons; and I would always recommend a diligent attendance on the courts of justice; as by that means the practice of them (a circumstance of great moment) will be easily and naturally acquired. Besides this, a much stronger impression will be made on the mind by the statement of the case, and the pleadings of the counsel, than from a cold uninteresting detail of it in a report. But, above all, a trial at bar, or a special argument, should never be neglected. As it is usual on these occasions to take notes, a knowledge of short-hand will give such facility to your labours, as to enable you to follow the most rapid speaker with certainty and precision. Common-place books are convenient and useful; and as they are generally lettered, a reference may be had to them in a moment. It is usual to acquire some insight into real business, under an eminent special pleader, previous to actual practice at the bar; this idea I beg leave strongly to second, and indeed I have known but a few great men who have not possessed this advantage. I here subjoin a list of books ne-

cessary for your perusal and instruction, to which I have added some remarks; and wishing that you may add to a successful practice, that integrity which can alone make you worthy of it, I remain, &c. &c.

Read Hume's History of England, particularly observing the rise, progress, and declension of the feudal system. Minutely attend to the Saxon government that preceded it, and dwell on the reigns of Edward I, Henry VI, Henry VII, Henry VIII, James I, Charles I, Charles II, and James II.

Blackstone. On the second reading turn to the references.

Mr. Justice Wright's learned Treatise on Tenures.

Coke Littleton, especially every word of Fee-simple, Fee-tail, and Tenant in tail.

Coke's Institutes; more particularly the 1st and 11d; and serjeant Hawkins's Compendium.

Coke's Reports—Plowden's Commentary—Bacon's Abridgement; and First Principles of Equity—Pigott on Fines—Reports of Croke, Burrow, Raymond, Saunders, Strange, and Peere Williams—Paley's Maxims—Lord Bacon's Elements of the Common Law.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.*

Sept. 25, 1750.

Dear sir,

You have, as I find, by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother, and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother now eighty-two years of age, whom therefore I must soon lose, unless it please God that she rather should mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mr. Strahan; and think I do myself honour when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to me nor to you of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues of which we are lament-

* Translator of Martial, Bossuet, &c. and formerly master of an academy at Kensington.

ing our deprivation. The greatest benefit, which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard, and incite, and elevate his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts: and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is indeed of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God: yet surely there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable, that union, which has received the divine approbation, shall continue to eternity.

There is one expedient, by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come: for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.

Dear sir,

I CANNOT but confess the failure of my correspondence; but hope the same regard, which you express for me on every other occasion, will incline you to forgive me. I am often, very often ill; and when I am well, am obliged to work; but, indeed, have never much used myself to punctuality. You are, however, not to make such kind of inferences, when I forbear to reply to your kind-

ness; for be assured, I never receive a letter from you without great pleasure, and a very warm sense of your generosity and friendship, which I heartily blame myself for not cultivating with more care. In this, as in many other cases, I go wrong in opposition to conviction; for I think scarce any temporal good equally to be desired with the regard and familiarity of worthy men, and hope we shall be some time nearer to each other, and have a more ready way of pouring out our hearts.

I am glad that you still find encouragement to persevere in your publication*, and shall beg the favour of six more volumes to add to my former six, when you can with any convenience send them me. Please to present a set in my name to Mr. Ruddiman†, of whom I hear that his learning is not his highest excellence.

I have transcribed the mottos, and returned them, I hope not too late, of which I think many very happily performed. Mr. Cave has put the last in the Magazine‡, in which I think he did well. I beg of you to write soon, and to write often, and to write long letters; which I hope in time to repay you, but you must be a patient creditor. I have, however, this of gratitude, that I think of you with regard, when I do not perhaps give the proofs which I ought of piety. Sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, &c.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

From the same to the Rev. Dr. Taylor.

March 18, 1752.

Dear sir,

LET me have your company and your instruction. Do not live away from me; my distress is great.

Pray desire Mrs. Taylor to inform me what mourning I should buy for my mother and miss Porter, and bring a note in writing with you.

Remember me in your prayers; for vain is the help of man. I am, dear sir, &c.

* This was of the Rambler, at Edinburgh, to which Mr. Elphinston translated the mottos.

† A very learned writer, author of several historical and philological works. He died January 1757.

‡ See Gent. Mag. Oct. 1752.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

January 1, 1755.

Dearest madam,

THOUGH I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish, indeed, I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes: yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to, dearest, dearest madam, yours, &c.

LETTER XC.

From the same to the same.

Jan. 3, 1755.

Dearest madam,

NOBODY but you can recompense me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you, I concluded, when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write, lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise, dearest madam, your, &c.

LETTER XCI.

Dr. Johnson to the Right Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield.

February, 1755.

My lord,

I HAVE been lately informed, by the proprietor of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind,

by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*;—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance*, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it†; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer

* The following note is subjoined by Mr. Langton.—Dr. Johnson, when he gave me this copy of his letter, desired that I would annex to it his information to me, that whereas it is said in the letter that ‘no assistance has been received,’ he did once receive from lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds; but as that was so inconsiderable a sum, he thought the mention of it could not properly find place in a letter of the kind that this was.

† In this passage Dr. Johnson evidently alludes to the loss of his wife.

of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my lord, your lordship's most humble, most obedient servant.

LETTER XCII.

*Dr. Johnson to Miss *****.*

July 19, 1755.

Madam,

I KNOW not how liberally your generosity would reward those who should do you any service, when you can so kindly acknowledge a favour which I intended only to myself. That accidentally hearing that you were in town, I made haste to enjoy an interval of pleasure, which I found would be short, was the natural consequence of that self-love which is always busy in quest of happiness; of that happiness which we often miss when we think it near, and sometimes find when we imagine it lost. When I had missed you, I went away disappointed; and did not know that my vexation would be so amply repaid by so kind a letter. A letter indeed can but imperfectly supply the place of its writer, at least of such a writer as you; and a letter which makes me still more desire your presence, is but a weak consolation under the necessity of living longer without you: with this however I must be for a time content, as much content at least as discontent will suffer me; for Mr. Baretti being a single being in this part of the world, and entirely clear from all engagements, takes the advantage of his independence, and will come before me; for which if I could blame him, I should punish him; but my own heart tells me that he only does to me, what, if I could, I should do to him.

I hope Mrs. —, when she came to her favourite place, found her house dry, and her woods growing, and the breeze whistling, and the birds singing, and her own heart dancing. And for you, madam, whose heart cannot yet dance to such music, I know not what to hope; indeed I could hope every thing that would please you, except that perhaps the absence of higher pleasures is necessary to keep some little place vacant

in your remembrance for, madam, your, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

Dec. 30, 1755.

Dear madam,

IT is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden succession of cold to heat; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

Of the fallaciousness of hope, and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation; and made me consider all that I have promised myself, as less certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realized by execution.

Continue, my dearest, your prayers for me, that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it.

The doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already

exchanged injunctions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it; I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which for me is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument. "I think, therefore I am." It is as good a consequence, "I write, therefore I am alive." I might give another, "I am alive, therefore I love miss Boothby;" but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life. I am, dearest madam, with sincere affection, your, &c.

LETTER XCIV.

From the same to the same.

Dec. 30.

My sweet angel,

I HAVE read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement; whether you can read my notes I know not. You ought not to be offended: I am, perhaps, as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and I should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire, however, to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what is in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to shew it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines. I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal, otherwise than condi-

tionally. Dear angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel, finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red-port, or to eat it first, and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and, if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders: yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is, in my opinion, very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a-day, will be sufficient to begin, or less if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces: but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of sloes. Has the doctor mentioned the bark? in powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome. I am full of care. I love you and honour you; and am very unwilling to lose you. *A Dieu je vous recommande.* I am, madam, your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.

LETTER XCV.

Dr. Johnson to Joseph Baretti, at Milan.

London, June 10, 1761.

You reproach me very often with parsimony of writing; but you may discover by the extent of my paper, that I design to recompense rarity by length. A short letter to a distant friend is, in my opinion, an insult like that of a slight bow or cursory salutation, a proof of unwillingness to do much, even where there is a

necessity of doing something. Yet it must be remembered, that he who continues the same course of life in the same place will have little to tell. One week and one year are very like another. The silent changes made by time are not always perceived; and if they are not perceived, cannot be recounted. I have risen and lain down, talked and mused, while you have roved over a considerable part of Europe; yet I have not envied my Baretti any of his pleasures, though perhaps I have envied others his company; and I am glad to have other nations made acquainted with the character of the English, by a traveller who has so nicely inspected our manners, and so successfully studied our literature. I received your kind letter from Falmouth, in which you gave me notice of your departure for Lisbon; and another from Lisbon, in which you told me that you were to leave Portugal in a few days. To either of these, how could any answer be returned? I have had a third from Turin, complaining that I have not answered the former. Your English style still continues in its purity and vigour. With vigour your genius will supply it; but its purity must be continued by close attention. To use two languages familiarly, and without contaminating one by the other, is very difficult; and to use more than two, is hardly to be hoped. The praises which some have received for their multiplicity of languages, may be sufficient to excite industry, but can hardly generate confidence.

I know not whether I can heartily rejoice at the kind reception which you have found, or at the popularity to which you are exalted. I am willing that your merit should be distinguished; but cannot wish that your affections may be gained. I would have you happy wherever you are: yet I would have you wish to return to England. If ever you visit us again, you will find the kindness of your friends undiminished. To tell you how many inquiries are made after you, would be tedious, or, if not tedious, would be vain; because you may be told in a very few words, that all who knew you, wish you well; and all that you embraced at your departure, will caress you at your return; therefore do not let Italian academicians nor Italian ladies drive us from your thoughts. You may find

among us what you will leave behind, soft smiles and easy sonnets. Yet I shall not wonder if all our invitations should be rejected; for there is a pleasure in being considerable at home, which is not easily resisted.

By conducting Mr. Southwell to Venice, you fulfilled, I know, the original contract: yet I would wish you not wholly to loose him from your notice, but to recommend him to such acquaintance as may best secure him from suffering by his own follies, and to take such general care both of his safety and his interest as may come within your power. His relations will thank you for any such gratuitous attention: at least, they will not blame you for any evil that may happen, whether they thank you or not for any good.

You know that we have a new king and a new parliament. Of the new parliament Fitzherbert is a member. We were so weary of our old king, that we are much pleased with his successor: of whom we are so much inclined to hope great things, that most of us begin already to believe them. The young man is hitherto blameless; but it would be unreasonable to expect much from the immaturity of juvenile years, and the ignorance of princely education. He has been long in the hands of the Scots, and has already favoured them more than the English will contentedly endure. But perhaps he scarcely knows whom he has distinguished, or whom he has disgusted.

The artists have instituted a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, as I am told, of foreign Academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Baretti. This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists and lovers of art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of our time, of that time which never can return.

I know my Baretti will not be satisfied with a letter in which I give him no account of myself: yet what account shall

I give of him? I have not, since the day of our separation, suffered or done any thing considerable. The only change in my way of life is, that I have frequented the theatre more than in former seasons. But I have gone thither only to escape from myself. We have had many new farces, and the comedy called *The Jealous Wife*, which, though not written with much genius, was yet so well adapted to the stage, and so well exhibited by the actors, that it was crowded for near twenty nights. I am digressing from myself to the play-house; but a barren plan must be filled with episodes. Of myself I have nothing to say, but that I have hitherto lived without the concurrence of my own judgment; yet I continue to flatter myself, that, when you return, you will find me mended. I do not wonder that, where the monastic life is permitted, every order finds votaries, and every monastery inhabitants. Men will submit to any rule, by which they may be exempted from the tyranny of caprice and of chance. They are glad to supply, by external authority, their own want of constancy and resolution, and court the government of others, when long experience has convinced them of their own inability to govern themselves. If I were to visit Italy, my curiosity would be more attracted by convents than by palaces; though I am afraid that I should find expectation in both places equally disappointed, and life in both places supported with impatience, and quitted with reluctance. That it must be so soon quitted, is a powerful remedy against impatience; but what shall free us from reluctance? Those who have endeavoured to teach us to die well, have taught few to die willingly; yet I cannot but hope that a good life might end at last in a contented death.

You see to what a train of thought I am drawn by the mention of myself. Let me now turn my attention upon you. I hope you take care to keep an exact journal, and to register all occurrences and observations; for your friends here expect such a book of travels as has not been often seen. You have given us good specimens in your letters from Lisbon. I wish you had staid longer in Spain, for no country is less known to the rest of Europe; but the quickness of your

discernment must make amends for the celerity of your motions. He that knows which way to direct his view, sees much in a little time.

Write to me very often, and I will not neglect to write to you; and I may perhaps in time get something to write; at least, you will know by my letters, whatever else they may have or want, that I continue to be your most affectionate friend.

LETTER XCVI.

Dr. Johnson to Joseph Baretti.

London, July 20, 1762.

Sir,

HOWEVER justly you may accuse me for want of punctuality in correspondence, I am not so far lost in negligence as to omit the opportunity of writing to you, which Mr. Beauclerk's passage through Milan affords me.

I suppose you received the *Idlers*, and I intend that you shall soon receive *Shakspeare*, that you may explain his works to the ladies of Italy, and tell them the story of the editor, among the other strange narratives with which your long residence in his unknown region has supplied you.

As you have now been long away, I suppose your curiosity may pant for some news of your old friends. Miss Williams and I live much as we did. Miss Cotterel still continues to cling to Mrs. Porter, and Charlotte is now big of the fourth child. Mr. Reynolds gets six thousand a year. Levett is lately married, not without much suspicion that he has been wretchedly cheated in his match. Mr. Chambers is gone this day, for the first time, the circuit with the judges. Mr. Richardson is dead of an apoplexy, and his second daughter has married a merchant.

My vanity, or my kindness, makes me flatter myself, that you would rather hear of me than of those whom I have mentioned; but of myself I have very little which I care to tell. Last winter I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I had left them, inhabited by a new race of people, to whom I was very little known. My play-fellows were grown old, and forced me to suspect, that I was no longer young.

My only remaining friend has changed his principles, and has become the tool of the predominant faction. My daughter-in-law, from whom I expected most, and whom I met with sincere benevolence, has lost the beauty and gaiety of youth, without having gained much of the wisdom of age. I wandered about for five days, and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much happiness, there is at least such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart.

I think, in a few weeks, to try another excursion: though to what end? Let me know, my Baretti, what has been the result of your return to your own country; whether time has made any alteration for the better; and whether, when the first raptures of salutation were over, you did not find your thoughts confessed their disappointment.

Moral sentences appear ostentatious and tumid, when they have no greater occasions than the journey of a wit to his own town: yet such pleasures and such pains make up the general mass of life: and as nothing is little to him that feels it with great sensibility, a mind able to see common incidents in their real state, is disposed by very common incidents to very serious contemplations. Let us trust that a time will come, when the present moment shall be no longer irksome; when we shall not borrow all our happiness from hope, which at last is to end in disappointment.

I beg that you will shew Mr. Beauclerk all the civilities that you have in your power; for he has always been kind to me.

I have lately seen Mr. Straicto, professor of Padua, who has told me of your quarrel with an abbot of the Celestine Order; but had not the particulars very ready in his memory. When you write to Mr. Marsili, let him know that I remember him with kindness.

May you, my Baretti, be very happy at Milan, or some other place nearer to, sir, your most affectionate humble servant, &c.

LETTER XCVII.

Dr. Johnson to Joseph Baretti.

Dec. 21, 1762.

Sir,

You are not to suppose, with all your conviction of my idleness, that I have passed all this time without writing to my Baretti. I gave a letter to Mr. Beauclerk, who, in my opinion, and in his own, was hastening to Naples for the recovery of his health; but he has stopped at Paris, and I know not when he will proceed. Langton is with him.

I will not trouble you with speculations about peace and war. The good or ill success of battles and embassies extends itself to a very small part of domestic life; we all have good and evil, which we feel more sensibly than our petty part of public miscarriage or prosperity. I am sorry for your disappointment, with which you seem more touched than I should expect a man of your resolution and experience to have been, did I not know that general truths are seldom applied to particular occasions; and that the fallacy of our self-love extends itself as wide as our interest or affections. Every man believes that mistresses are unfaithful, and patrons capricious; but he excepts his own mistress and his own patron. We have all learned that greatness is negligent and contemptuous, and that in courts, life is often languished away in ungratified expectation; but he that approaches greatness, or glitters in a court, imagines that destiny has at last exempted him from the common lot.

Do not let such evils overwhelm you as thousands have suffered and thousands have surmounted; but turn your thoughts with vigour to some other plan of life; and keep always in your mind, that, with due submission to Providence, a man of genius has been seldom ruined but by himself. Your patron's weakness or insensibility will finally do you little hurt, if he is not assisted by your own passions. Of your love I know not the propriety, nor can estimate the power; but in love, as in every other passion of which hope is the essence, we ought always to remember the uncertainty of events. There is indeed nothing that so much seduces reason from her vigilance, as the thought of passing life with an

amiable woman ; and if all would happen that a lover fancies, I know not what other terrestrial happiness would deserve pursuit. But love and marriage are different states. Those who are to suffer the evils together, and to suffer often for the sake of one another, soon lose that tenderness of look and that benevolence of mind which arose from the participation of unmingled pleasure and successive amusement. A woman we are sure will not be always fair ; we are not sure she will always be virtuous ; and man cannot retain through life that respect and assiduity by which he pleases for a day or for a month. I do not however pretend to have discovered that life has any thing more to be desired than a prudent and virtuous marriage ; therefore know not what counsel to give you.

If you can quit your imagination of love and greatness, and leave your hopes of preferment and bridal raptures to try once more the fortune of literature and industry, the way through France is now open. We flatter ourselves that we shall cultivate with great diligence the arts of peace ; and every man will be welcome among us who can teach us any thing we do not know. For your part, you will find all your own friends willing to receive you.

Reynolds still continues to increase in reputation and in riches. Miss Williams, who very much loves you, goes on in the old way. Miss Cotterel is still with Mrs. Porter. Miss Charlotte is married to Dean Lewis, and has three children. Mr. Levet has married a street walker. But the gazette of my narration must now arrive to tell you, that Bathurst went physician to the army, and died at the Havannah.

I know not whether I have not sent you word that Huggins and Richardson are both dead. When we see our enemies and friends gliding away before us, let us not forget that we are subject to the general law of mortality, and shall soon be where our doom will be fixed for ever. I pray God to bless you, and am, sir, your most affectionate humble servant, &c.

Write soon.

LETTER XCVIII.

Mrs. Thrale to Mr. —, on his marriage.

My dear sir,

I RECEIVED the news of your marriage with infinite delight, and hope that the sincerity with which I wish your happiness may excuse the liberty I take in giving you a few rules whereby more certainly to obtain it. I see you smile at my wrong-headed kindness, and, reflecting on the charms of your bride, cry out in a rapture, that you are happy enough without my rules. I know you are ; but after one of the forty years, which I hope you will pass pleasingly together, are over, this letter may come in turn, and rules for felicity may not be found unnecessary, however some of them may appear impracticable.

Could that kind of love be kept alive through the married state, which makes the charm of a single one, the sovereign good would no longer be sought for ; in the union of two faithful lovers it would be found : but reason shows us that this is impossible, and experience informs us that it never was so ; we must preserve it as long, and supply it as happily, as we can.

When your present violence of passion subsides, however, and a more cool and tranquil affection takes its place, be not hasty to censure yourself as indifferent, or to lament yourself as unhappy ; you have lost that only which it was impossible to retain, and it were graceless amid the pleasures of a prosperous summer to regret the blossoms of a transient spring. Neither unwarily condemn your bride's insipidity, till you have recollected that no object, however sublime, no sounds, however charming, can continue to transport us with delight when they no longer strike us with novelty. The skill to renovate the powers of pleasing is said indeed to be possessed by some women in an eminent degree, but the artifices of maturity are seldom seen to adorn the innocence of youth ; you have made your choice, and ought to approve it.

Satiety follows quick upon the heels of possession ; and to be happy, we must always have something in view. The person of your lady is already all your own, and will not grow more pleasing in your eyes I doubt, though the rest of your sex

will think her handsomer for these dozen years. Turn, therefore, all your attention to her mind, which will daily grow brighter by polishing. Study some easy science together, and acquire a similarity of tastes while you enjoy a community of pleasures. You will, by this means, have many images in common, and be freed from the necessity of separating to find amusement: nothing is so dangerous to wedded love as the possibility of either being happy out of the company of the other; endeavour therefore to cement the present intimacy on every side; let your wife never be kept ignorant of your income, your expenses, your friendships, or aversions; let her know your very faults, but make them amiable by your virtues; consider all concealment as a breach of fidelity; let her never have any thing to find out in your character; and remember, that from the moment one of the partners turns spy upon the other, they have commenced a state of hostility.

Seek not for happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a deviation into folly. Listen not to those sages, who advise you always to scorn the counsel of a woman, and if you comply with her requests pronounce you to be wife-ridden. Think not any privation, except of positive evil, an excellence; and do not congratulate yourself that your wife is not a learned lady, that she never touches a card, or is wholly ignorant how to make a pudding. Cards, cookery, and learning, are all good in their places, and may all be used with advantage.

With regard to expense, I can only observe, that the money laid out in the purchase of distinction is seldom or ever profitably employed. We live in an age when splendid furniture and glittering equipage are grown too common to catch the notice of the meanest spectator; and, for the greater ones, they only regard our wasteful folly with silent contempt, or open indignation. This may perhaps be a displeasing reflection, but the following consideration ought to make amends. The age we live in, says, I think, peculiar attention to the higher distinctions of wit, knowledge, and virtue, to which we may more safely, more cheaply, and more honourably, aspire. The giddy flirt of quality frets at the respect she sees paid to lady Edgcombe; and the

gay dunce sits pining for a partner, while Jones the Orientalist leads up the ball.

I said that the person of your lady would not grow more pleasing to you, but pray let her never suspect that it grows less so: that a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person, is well known; nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man; and what mortification can exceed the disappointment, if the end be not obtained! There is no reproof, however pointed, no punishment, however severe, that a woman of spirit will not prefer to neglect; and if she can endure it without complaint, it only proves that she means to make herself amends by the attention of others for the slights of her husband. For this, and for every reason, it behoves a married man not to let his politeness fail, though his ardour may abate; but to retain, at least, that general civility towards his own lady which he is so willing to pay to every other, and not show a wife of eighteen or twenty years old, that every man in company can treat her with more complaisance than he who so often vowed to her eternal fondness.

It is not my opinion that a young woman should be indulged in every wild wish of her gay heart or giddy head, but contradiction may be softened by domestic kindness, and quiet pleasures substituted in the place of noisy ones. Public amusements are not indeed so expensive as is sometimes imagined, but they tend to alienate the minds of married people from each other. A well-chosen society of friends and acquaintance, more eminent for virtue and good sense than for gaiety and splendour, where the conversation of the day may afford comment for the evening, seems the most rational pleasure this great town can afford; and to this a game at cards now and then gives an additional relish.

That your own superiority should always be seen, but never felt, seems an excellent general rule. A wife should outshine her husband in nothing, not even in her dress. If she happens to have a taste for the trifling distinctions that finery can confer, suffer her not for a moment to fancy, when she appears in public, that sir Edward or the Colonel are

finer gentlemen than her husband. The bane of married happiness among the city men in general has been, that finding themselves unfit for polite life they transferred their vanity to their ladies, dressed them up gaily, and sent them out a gallanting, while the good man was to regale with port wine or rum punch, perhaps among mean companions, after the counting house was shut; this practice produced the ridicule thrown on them in all our comedies and novels since commerce began to prosper. But now that I am so near the subject, a word or two on jealousy may not be amiss; for though not a failing of the present age's growth, yet the seeds of it are too certainly sown in every warm bosom for us to neglect it as a fault of no consequence. If you are ever tempted to be jealous, watch your wife narrowly, but never tease her: tell her your jealousy, but conceal your suspicion; let her, in short, be satisfied that it is only your odd temper, and even troublesome attachment, that makes you follow her; but let her not dream that you ever doubted seriously of her virtue, even for a moment. If she is disposed towards jealousy of you, let me beseech you to be always explicit with her, and never mysterious: be above delighting in her pain, of all things,—nor do your business, nor pay your visits, with an air of concealment, when all you are doing might as well be proclaimed perhaps in the parish vestry. But I will hope better than this of your tenderness and of your virtue, and will release you from a lecture you have so very little need of, unless your extreme youth and my uncommon regard will excuse it. And now, farewell; make my kindest compliments to your wife, and be happy in proportion as happiness is wished you by, dear sir, &c.

LETTER XCIX.

*Dr. Johnson à Mr. Mr. Boswell, à la
Cour de l'Empereur, Utrecht.*

London, Dec. 8, 1763.

Dear sir,

You are not to think yourself forgotten, or criminally neglected, that you have had yet no letter from me. I love to see my friends, to hear from them, to talk to them, and to talk of them; but

it is not without a considerable effort of resolution that I prevail upon myself to write. I would not, however, gratify my own indolence by the omission of any important duty, or any office of real kindness.

To tell you that I am or am not well, that I have or have not been in the country, that I drank your health in the room in which we sat last together, and that your acquaintance continue to speak of you with their former kindness, topics with which those letters are commonly filled which are written only for the sake of writing, I seldom shall think worth communicating; but if I can have it in my power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion, or fortify any generous resolution, you need not doubt but I shall at least wish to prefer the pleasure of gratifying a friend much less esteemed than yourself, before the gloomy calm of idle vacancy. Whether I shall easily arrive at an exact punctuality of correspondence, I cannot tell. I shall, at present, expect that you will receive this in return for two which I have had from you. The first, indeed, gave me an account so hopeless of the state of your mind, that it hardly admitted or deserved an answer; by the second I was much better pleased; and the pleasure will still be increased by such a narrative of the progress of your studies, as may evince the continuance of an equal and rational application of your mind to some useful inquiry.

You will, perhaps, wish to ask, what study I would recommend. I shall not speak of theology, because it ought not to be considered as a question whether you shall endeavour to know the will of God.

I shall, therefore, consider only such studies as we are at liberty to pursue or to neglect; and of these I know not how you will make a better choice, than by studying the civil law, as your father advises, and the ancient languages, as you had determined for yourself: at least resolve, while you remain in any settled residence, to spend a certain number of hours every day amongst your books. The dissipation of thought, of which you complain, is nothing more than the vacillation of a mind suspended between different motives, and changing its direction as any motive gains or loses strength.

If you can but kindle in your mind any strong desire, if you can but keep predominant any wish for some particular excellence or attainment, the gusts of imagination will break away, without any effect upon your conduct, and commonly without any traces left upon the memory.

There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a desire of distinction, which inclines every man first to hope, and then to believe, that nature has given him something peculiar to himself. This vanity makes one mind nurse aversions, and another actuate desires, till they rise by art much above their original state of power; and as affection in time improves to habit, they at last tyrannize over him who at first encouraged them only for show. Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison. You know a gentleman, who, when first he set his foot in the gay world, as he prepared himself to whirl in the vortex of pleasure, imagined a total indifference and universal negligence to be the most agreeable concomitants of youth, and the strongest indication of an airy temper and a quick apprehension. Vacant to every object, and sensible of every impulse, he thought that all appearance of diligence would deduct something from the reputation of genius; and hoped that he should appear to attain, amidst all the ease of carelessness, and the tumult of diversion, that knowledge and those accomplishments which mortals of the common fabric obtain only by mute abstraction and solitary drudgery. He tried this scheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his sense and his virtue; he then wished to return to his studies; and finding long habits of idleness and pleasure harder to be cured than he expected, still willing to retain his claim to some extraordinary prerogatives, resolved the common consequences of irregularity into an unalterable decree of destiny, and concluded that nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment.

Let all such fancies, illusive and destructive, be banished henceforward from your thoughts for ever. Resolve, and keep your resolution; choose, and pursue your choice. If you spend this day in study, you will find yourself still more

able to study to-morrow; not that you are to expect that you shall at once obtain a complete victory. Depravity is not very easily overcome. Resolution will sometimes relax, and diligence will sometimes be interrupted; but let no accidental surprise or deviation, whether short or long, dispose you to despondency. Consider these failings as incident to all mankind. Begin again where you left off, and endeavour to avoid the seducements that prevailed over you before.

This, my dear Boswell, is advice which, perhaps, has been often given you, and given you without effect. But this advice, if you will not take from others, you must take from your own reflections, if you purpose to do the duties of the station to which the bounty of Providence has called you.

Let me have a long letter from you as soon as you can. I hope you continue your journal, and enrich it with many observations upon the country in which you reside. It will be a favour if you can get me any books in the Frisick language, and can inquire how the poor are maintained in the Seven Provinces. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate servant.

LETTER C.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

[Not dated, but written about the 15th of March.]

Dear sir,

I AM ashamed to think that since I received your letter I have passed so many days without answering it.

I think there is no great difficulty in resolving your doubts. The reasons for which you are inclined to visit London, are, I think, not of sufficient strength to answer the objections. That you should delight to come once a year to the fountain of intelligence and pleasure is very natural; but both information and pleasure must be regulated by propriety. Pleasure, which cannot be obtained but by unreasonable or unsuitable expense, must always end in pain: and pleasure, which must be enjoyed at the expense of another's pain, can never be such as a worthy mind can fully delight in.

What improvement you might gain by coming to London, you may easily supply or easily compensate, by enjoining yourself some particular study at home, or opening some new avenue to information. Edinburgh is not yet exhausted; and I am sure you will find no pleasure here, which can deserve either that you should anticipate any part of your future fortune, or that you should condemn yourself and your lady to penurious frugality for the rest of the year.

I need not tell you what regard you owe to Mrs. Boswell's entreaties; or how much you ought to study the happiness of her, who studies yours with so much diligence, and of whose kindness you enjoy such good effects. Life cannot subsist in society but by reciprocal concessions. She permitted you to ramble last year; you must permit her now to keep you at home.

Your last reason is so serious, that I am unwilling to oppose it. Yet you must remember, that your image of worshipping once a year in a certain place, in imitation of the Jews, is but a comparison, and *simile non est idem*; if the annual resort to Jerusalem was a duty to the Jews, it was a duty because it was commanded; and you have no such command, therefore no such duty. It may be dangerous to receive too readily, and indulge too fondly, opinions from which perhaps no pious mind is wholly disengaged, of local sanctity and local devotion. You know what strange effects they have produced over a great part of the Christian world. I am now writing, and you, when you read this, are reading, under the eye of Omnipresence.

To what degree fancy is to be admitted into religious offices, it would require much deliberation to determine. I am far from intending totally to exclude it. Fancy is a faculty bestowed by our Creator; and it is reasonable, that all his gifts should be used to his glory, that all our faculties should co-operate in his worship; but they are to co-operate according to the will of him that gave them, according to the order which his wisdom has established. As ceremonies prudential or convenient are less obligatory than positive ordinances, as bodily worship is only the token to others or ourselves

of mental adoration, so Fancy is always to act in subordination to Reason. We may take Fancy for a companion, but must follow Reason as our guide. We may allow Fancy to suggest certain ideas in certain places, but Reason must always be heard; when she tells us, that those ideas and those places have no natural or necessary relation. When we enter a church, we habitually recall to mind the duty of adoration, but we must not omit adoration for want of a temple; because we know, and ought to remember, that the Universal Lord is everywhere present; and that, therefore, to come to Iona, or to Jerusalem, though it may be useful, cannot be necessary.

Thus I have answered your letter, and have not answered it negligently. I love you too well to be careless when you are serious.

I think I shall be very diligent next week about our travels, which I have too long neglected. I am, dear sir, your most, &c.

Compliments to madam and miss.

LETTER CI.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. James Macpherson.

Mr. James Macpherson,
I RECEIVED your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reason to the public, which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

LETTER CII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Boswell.

July 22, 1777.

Madam,
THOUGH I am well enough pleased with the taste of sweetmeats, very little of the pleasure which I received at the arrival of your jar of marmalade arose from eating it. I received it as a token of friendship, as a proof of reconciliation, things much sweeter than sweetmeats, and upon this consideration I return you, dear madam, my sincerest thanks. By having your kindness I think I have a double security for the continuance of Mr. Boswell's, which it is not to be expected that any man can long keep, when the influence of a lady so highly and so justly valued operates against him. Mr. Boswell will tell you, that I was always faithful to your interest, and always endeavoured to exalt you in his estimation. You must now do the same for me. We must all help one another; and you must now consider me as, dear madam, your most obliged and most humble servant.

LETTER CIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.

July 27, 1778.

Sir,

HAVING myself suffered what you are now suffering, I well know the weight of your distress, how much need you have of comfort, and how little comfort can be given. A loss, such as yours, lacerates the mind, and breaks the whole system of purposes and hopes. It leaves a dismal vacuity in life, which affords nothing on which the affections can fix, or to which endeavour may be directed. All this I have known; and it is now, in the vicissitude of things, your turn to know it.

But in the condition of mortal beings, one must lose another. What would be the wretchedness of life, if there was not something always in view, some Being immutable and unailing, to whose mercy man may have recourse! Τον πρωτον κινυντα ακινητον.

Here we must rest. The greatest Being is the most benevolent. We must not grieve for the dead as men without hope,

because we know they are in his hands. We have, indeed, not leisure to grieve long, because we are hastening to follow them. Your race and mine have been interrupted by many obstacles, but we must humbly hope for an happy end. I am, sir, your most humble servant.

LETTER CIV.

Dr. Johnson to ————.

Bolt Court, Aug. 30, 1780.

Dear sir,

NOR many days ago Dr. L. showed me a letter, in which you make kind mention of me: I hope, therefore, you will not be displeased that I endeavour to preserve your good-will by some observations, which your letter suggested to me.

You are afraid of falling into some improprieties in the daily service, by reading to an audience that requires no exactness. Your fear, I hope, secures you from danger. They, who contract absurd habits, are such as have no fear. It is impossible to do the same thing very often without some peculiarity of manner; but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at least preserve it from being bad; to make it very good, there must, I think, be something of natural or casual felicity, which cannot be taught.

Your present method of making your sermons seems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be supposed to have sermons more their own than yours will be. Take care to register somewhere or other the authors from whom your several discourses are borrowed; and do not imagine that you shall always remember even what perhaps you now think it impossible to forget.

My advice however is, that you attempt from time to time an original sermon, and in the labour of composition do not burden your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation propriety of thought and elegance of expression. Invent first, and then embellish. The production of something, where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy than the expansion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently your thoughts as they rise in the first

words that occur, and when you have matter you will easily give it form; nor perhaps will this method be always necessary, for by habit your thoughts and diction will flow together.

The composition of sermons is not very difficult; the divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they supply sources of invention, and keep every part to its proper place.

What I like least in your letter is your account of the manners of the parish; from which I gather that it has been long neglected by the parson. The dean of Carlisle*, who was then a little rector in Northamptonshire, told me that it might be discerned whether or no there was a clergyman resident in a parish, by the civil or savage manners of the people. Such a congregation as yours stand in much need of reformation; and I would not have you think it impossible to reform them. A very savage parish was civilized by a decayed gentlewoman, who came among them to teach a petty school. My learned friend, Dr. Wheeler, of Oxford, when he was a young man, had the care of a neighbouring parish for fifteen pounds a year, which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience that it compelled him to make a sermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the communion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, she only answered that she was no scholar. He was advised to set some good woman or man of the parish, a little wiser than herself, to talk to her in language level to her mind. Such honest, I may call them holy artifices, must be practised by every clergyman, for all means must be tried by which souls may be saved. Talk to your people, however, as much as you can, and you will find that the more frequently you converse with them upon religious subjects, the more willingly they will attend, and the more submissively they will learn. A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable. I think I have now only to say, that in the momentous work that you have undertaken I pray God to bless you. I am, sir, your most humble servant.

* Now bishop of Dromore.

LETTER CV.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on the Death of Mr. Thrale.

London, April 5, 1781.

Dearest madam,

OF your injunctions, to pray for you and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of him, who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother; and, at last, the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven.

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and then use those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you, that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expenses, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses and all the goods?

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin, which shall never end. I am, dearest madam, your, &c.

LETTER CVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, April 9, 1781.

Dearest madam,

THAT you are gradually recovering your tranquillity is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great; but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty, deserves great praise; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day. I am, &c.

LETTER CVII.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Hector in Birmingham.

[Without a date, but supposed to be about this time.]

Dear sir,

THAT you and dear Mrs. Careless should have care or curiosity about my health, gives me that pleasure which every man feels from finding himself not forgotten. In age we feel again that love of our native place and our early friends, which, in the bustle or amusements of middle life, were overborne and suspended. You and I should now naturally cling to one another: we have outlived most of those who could pretend to rival us in each other's kindness. In our walk

through life we have dropped our companions, and are now to pick up such a chance may offer us, or to travel on alone. You, indeed, have a sister, with whom you can divide the day: I have no natural friend left; but Providence has been pleased to preserve me from neglect; I have not wanted such alleviations of life as friendship could supply. My health has been, from my twentieth year, such as has seldom afforded me a single day of ease; but it is at least not worse; and I sometimes make myself believe that it is better. My disorders are, however, still sufficiently oppressive.

I think of seeing Staffordshire again this autumn, and intend to find my way through Birmingham, where I hope to see you and dear Mrs. Careless well. I am, sir, your affectionate friend.

LETTER CVIII.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

London, March 28, 1782.

Dear sir,

THE pleasure which we used to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Easter-day, we must this year be content to miss. Let us, however, pray for each other, and hope to see one another yet from time to time with mutual delight. My disorder has been a cold, which impeded the organs of respiration, and kept me many weeks in a state of great uneasiness, but by repeated phlebotomy is now relieved; and, next to the recovery of Mrs. Boswell, I flatter myself that you will rejoice at mine.

What we shall do in the summer it is yet too early to consider. You want to know what you shall do now; I do not think this time of bustle and confusion likely to produce any advantage to you. Every man has those to reward and gratify who have contributed to his advancement. To come hither with such expectations at the expense of borrowed money, which, I find, you know not where to borrow, can hardly be considered as prudent. I am sorry to find, what your solicitation seems to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to set the quiet of your whole life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at

last inherit nothing; all that you receive must pay for the past. You must get a place, or pine in penury, with the empty name of a great estate. Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation, and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it. Live on what you have, live if you can on less; do not borrow either for vanity or pleasure: the vanity will end in shame, and the pleasure in regret; stay therefore at home till you have saved money for your journey hither.

'The Beauties of Johnson' are said to have got money to the collector; if the 'Deformities' have the same success, I shall be still a more extensive benefactor.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, who is, I hope, reconciled to me; and to the young people, whom I never have offended.

You never told me the success of your plea against the solicitors. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CIX.

From the same to the same.

London, Sept. 7, 1782.

Dear sir,

I HAVE struggled through this year with so much infirmity of body, and such strong impressions of fragility of life, that death, wherever it appears, fills me with melancholy; and I cannot hear without emotion of the removal of any one, whom I have known, into another state.

Your father's death had every circumstance that could enable you to bear it; it was at a mature age, and it was expected; and as his general life had been pious, his thoughts had doubtless for many years past been turned upon eternity. That you did not find him sensible must doubtless grieve you; his disposition towards you was undoubtedly that of a kind, though not of a fond father. Kindness, at least actual, is in our power, but fondness is not; and if by negligence or imprudence you had extinguished his fondness, he could not at will rekindle it. Nothing then re-

mained between you but mutual forgiveness of each other's faults, and mutual desire of each other's happiness.

I shall long to know his final disposition of his fortune.

You, dear sir, have now a new station, and have therefore new cares, and new employments. Life, as Cowley seems to say, ought to resemble a well-ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium should be simple, and should promise little. Begin your new course of life with the least show, and the least expense possible; you may at pleasure increase both, but you cannot easily diminish them. Do not think your estate your own, while any man can call upon you for money which you cannot pay; therefore, begin with timorous parsimony. Let it be your first care not to be in any man's debt.

When the thoughts are extended to a future state, the present life seems hardly worthy of all those principles of conduct, and maxims of prudence, which one generation of men has transmitted to another; but upon a closer view, when it is perceived how much evil is produced, and how much good is impeded by embarrassment and distress, and how little room the expedients of poverty leave for the exercise of virtue; its sorrows manifest that the boundless importance of the next life enforces some attention to the interests of this.

Be kind to the old servants, and secure the kindness of the agents and factors; do not disgust them by asperity, or unwelcome gaiety, or apparent suspicion. From them you must learn the real state of your affairs, the characters of your tenants, and the value of your lands.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell; I think her expectation from air and exercise are the best that she can form. I hope she will live long and happily.

I forgot whether I told you that Rasay has been here; we dined cheerfully together. I entertained lately a young gentleman from Coriatachat.

I received your letters only this morning. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CX.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

London, Dec. 7, 1782.

Dear sir,

HAVING passed almost this whole year in a succession of disorders, I went in October to Brighthelmston, whither I came in a state of so much weakness, that I rested four times in walking between the inn and the lodging. By physic and abstinence I grew better, and am now reasonably easy, though at a great distance from health. I am afraid, however, that health begins, after seventy, and often long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the established order of the creation, as it is vain to oppose it. He that lives must grow old; and he that would rather grow old than die, has God to thank for the infirmities of old age.

At your long silence I am rather angry. You do not, since now you are the head of your house, think it worth your while to try whether you or your friend can live longer without writing, nor suspect, after so many years of friendship, that when I do not write to you I forget you? Put all such useless jealousies out of your head, and disdain to regulate your own practice by the practice of another, or by any other principle than the desire of doing right.

Your œconomy, I suppose, begins now to be settled: your expenses are adjusted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Resolve not to be poor: whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness, it certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

Let me know the history of your life since your accession to your estate. How many houses, how many cows, how much land in your own hand, and what bargains you make with your tenants.

* * * * *

Of my 'Lives of the Poets,' they have printed a new edition in octavo, I hear, of three thousand. Did I give a set to lord Hailes? If I did not, I will do it out of these. What did you make of all your copy?

Mrs. Thrale and the three misses are now, for the winter, in Argyll-street. Sir Joshua Reynolds has been out of order, but is well again; and I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant.

LETTER CXI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Bolt Court, Fleet Street, June 19, 1783.

Dearest madam,

I AM sitting down in no cheerful solitude to write a narrative, which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will perhaps pass over now with the careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard, however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know; and I do not blame myself, who have for a great part of human life done you what good I could, and have never done you evil.

I had been disordered in the usual way, and had been relieved by the usual methods, by opium and cathartics, but had rather lessened my dose of opium.

On Monday the 16th I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted I suppose about half a minute; I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good; but I knew them not to be very good; I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytic stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself when it should come would excite less horror than seems now to attend it.

In order to rouse the vocal organs I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think, slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech, he left me my hand; I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand to act as occasion should require. In penning his note I had some difficulty; my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden, and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly, and very disinterested, and give me great hopes, but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

How this will be received by you I know not. I hope you will sympathise with me; but perhaps

My mistress, gracious, mild, and good,
Cries, Is he dumb? 'Tis time he shou'd.

But can this be possible? I hope it cannot. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be in a sober and serious hour remembered by you; and surely it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honoured you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have, in this great distress, your pity and your prayers. You see I yet turn to you with my complaints, as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred.

To the girls, who do not write often,

for Susy has written only once, and miss Thrale owes me a letter, I earnestly recommend, as their guardian and friend, that they remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

I suppose you may wish to know how my disease is treated by the physicians. They put a blister upon my back, and two from my ear to my throat, one on a side. The blister on the back has done little, and those on the throat have not risen. I bullied and bounced (it sticks to our last sand), and compelled the apothecary to make his salve according to the Edinburgh Dispensatory, that it might adhere better. I have two on now of my own prescription. They likewise give me salt of hartshorn, which I take with no great confidence, but am satisfied that what can be done is done for me.

O God! give me comfort and confidence in Thee: forgive my sins; and, if it be thy good pleasure, relieve my diseases, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I am almost ashamed of this querulous letter; but now it is written, let it go. I am, &c.

LETTER CXII.

From the same to the same.

London, July 3, 1783.

Dear madam,
DR. BROCKLESBY yesterday dismissed the cantharides, and I can now find a soft place upon my pillow. Last night was cool, and I rested well, and this morning I have been a friend at a poetical difficulty. Here is now a glimpse of day-light again; but how near is the evening? None can tell, and I will not prognosticate: we all know that from none of us it can be far distant; may none of us know this in vain!

I went, as I took care to boast, on Tuesday to the club, and hear that I was thought to have performed as well as usual. I dined on fish, with the wing of a small Turkey chick, and left roast beef, goose, and venison pye untouched. I live much on peas, and never had them so good, for so long a time; in any year that I can remember.

When do you go to Weymouth? and why do you go? Only I suppose to a new place, and the reason is sufficient to

those who have no reason to withhold them.

*** knows well enough how to live on four hundred a year, but where is he to have it? Had *** any thing of his own unsettled?

I am glad that Mrs. Seward talks of me, and loves me, and have in this still scene of life great comfort in reflecting, that I have given very few reason to hate me; I hope scarcely any man has known me closely but for his benefit, or cursorily but to his innocent entertainment. Tell me, you that know me best, whether this be true, that according to your answer I may continue my practice, or try to mend it.

Along with your kind letter yesterday came one likewise very kind from the Astons at Lichfield; but I do not know whether, as the summer is so far advanced, I shall travel so far, though I am not without hopes that frequent change of air may fortify me against the winter, which has been, in modern phrase, of late years very *inimical* to, madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXIII.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Susannah Thrale.

Dearest miss Susy,

WHEN you favoured me with your letter, you seemed to be in want of materials to fill it, having met with no great adventures, either of peril or delight, nor done nor suffered any thing out of the common course of life.

When you have lived longer, and considered more, you will find the common course of life very fertile of observation and reflection. Upon the common course of life must our thoughts and our conversation be generally employed. Our general course of life must denominate us wise or foolish; happy or miserable: if it is well regulated, we pass on prosperously and smoothly; as it is neglected, we live in embarrassment, perplexity, and uneasiness.

Your time, my love, passes, I suppose, in devotion, reading, work, and company. Of your devotions, in which I earnestly advise you to be very punctual, you may not perhaps think it proper to give me an account; and of work, unless I understood it better, it will be of no great use to say much; but books and

company will always supply you with materials for your letters to me, as I shall always be pleased to know what you are reading, and with what you are pleased; and shall take great delight in knowing what impression new modes or new characters make upon you, and to observe with what attention you distinguish the tempers, dispositions, and abilities of your companions.

A letter may be always made out of the books of the morning or talk of the evening; and any letters from you, my dearest, will be welcome to you, &c.

LETTER CXIV.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Aug. 20, 1783.

Madam,

THIS has been a day of great emotion; the office of the Communion of the Sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. She was too weak to rise from her bed, and is therefore to be supposed unlikely to live much longer. She has, I hope, little violent pain, but is wearing out by torpid inappetence and wearisome decay: but all the powers of her mind are in their full vigour; and, when she has spirits enough for conversation, she possesses all the intellectual excellence that she ever had. Surely this is an instance of mercy much to be desired by a parting soul.

At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler, the man with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope that all these admonitions will not be in vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon Eternal Mercy.

I read your last kind letter with great delight; but when I came to *love* and *honour*, what sprung in my mind?—How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time, and I sat near three hours with the patience of mortal born to bear; at last she declared

it quite finished, and seems to think it fine. I told her it was *Johnson's grimly Ghost*. It is to be engraved, and I think *in glided*, &c. will be a good inscription. I am, madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXV.

From the same to the same.

London, Sept. 22, 1783.

Dear madam,

HAPPY are you that have ease and leisure to want intelligence of air-balloons. Their existence is, I believe, indubitable; but I know not that they can possibly be of any use. The construction is this:—The chymical philosophers have discovered a body (which I have forgotten, but will inquire) which, dissolved by an acid, emits a vapour lighter than the atmospherical air. This vapour is caught, among other means, by tying a bladder, compressed upon the bottle in which the dissolution is performed; the vapour rising swells the bladder, and fills it. The bladder is then tied and removed, and another applied, till as much of this light air is collected as is wanted. Then a large spherical case is made, and very large it must be, of the lightest matter that can be found, secured by some method, like that of oiling silk, against all passage of air. Into this are emptied all the bladders of light air, and if there is light air enough it mounts into the clouds; upon the same principle as a bottle, filled with water, will sink in water, but a bottle filled with ether would float. It rises till it comes to air of equal tenuity with its own, if wind or water does not spoil it on the way. Such, madam, is an air-balloon.

Meteors have been this autumn very often seen, but I have never been in their way.

Poor Williams has, I hope, seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence, and she bore with fortitude. She has left me.

"Thou thy weary task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages."

Had she had good humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity-school.

The complaint about which you inquire is a sarcocele; I thought it a hydrocele, and heeded it but little. Puncture has detected the mistake: it can be safely suffered no longer. Upon inspection, three days ago, it was determined *extrema ventura*. If excision should be delayed, there is danger of a gangrene. You would not have me, for fear of pain, perish in putrefaction. I shall, I hope, with trust in Eternal Mercy, lay hold of the possibility of life which yet remains. My health is not bad; the gout is now trying at my feet. My appetite and digestion are good, and my sleep better than formerly: I am not dejected, and I am not feeble. There is, however, danger enough in such operations at seventy-four.

Let me have your prayers and those of the young dear people. I am, dear madam, your, &c.

Write soon and often.

LETTER CXVI.

From the same to the same.

London, Nov. 13, 1783.

Dear madam,

SINCE you have written to me with the attention and tenderness of ancient time, your letters give me a great part of the pleasure which a life of solitude admits. You will never bestow any share of your good-will on one who deserves better. Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may by a single blast of coldness be extinguished; but that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may for a while be suppressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard and every thing seen recalls some pleasure communicated, or some benefit conferred, some petty quarrel, or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week, but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost, but an *old friend* never can be found, and Nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost.

I have not forgotten the Davenants, though they seem to have forgotten me. I began very early to tell them what they have commonly found to be true. I am sorry to hear of their building. I have always warned those whom I loved against that mode of ostentatious waste.

You seem to mention lord Kilmurry as a stranger. We were at his house in Cheshire; and he one day dined with sir Lynch. What he tells of the epigram is not true, but perhaps he does not know it to be false. Do not you remember how he rejoiced in having *no park*? he could not disoblige his neighbours by sending them *no venison*.

The frequency of death, to those who look upon it in the leisure of Arcadia, is very dreadful. We all know what it should teach us; let us all be diligent to learn. Lucy Porter has lost her brother. But whom I have lost—let me not now remember. Let not your loss be added to the mournful catalogue. Write soon again to, madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXVII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Chapone.

Nov. 28, 1783.

Madam,

By sending the tragedy to me a second time* I think that a very honourable distinction has been shewn me; and I did not delay the perusal, of which I am now to tell the effect.

The construction of the play is not completely regular; the stage is too often vacant, and the scenes are not sufficiently connected. This, however, would be called, by Dryden, only a mechanical defect; which takes away little from the power of the poem, and which is seen rather than felt.

A rigid examiner of the diction might, perhaps, wish some words changed, and some lines more vigorously terminated. But from such petty imperfections what writer was ever free?

The general form and force of the dialogue is of more importance. It seems to want that quickness of reciprocation which characterizes the English drama, and is not always sufficiently fervid or animated.

* Dr. Johnson, having been very ill when the tragedy was first sent to him, had declined the consideration of it.

Of the sentiments, I remember not one that I wished omitted. In the imagery I cannot forbear to distinguish the comparison of joy succeeding grief, to light rushing on the eye accustomed to darkness. It seems to have all that can be desired to make it please. It is new, just, and delightful†.

With the characters, either as conceived or preserved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulate a writer, who, in defiance of prejudice and fashion, made the archbishop a good man, and scorned all thoughtless applause, which a vicious churchman would have brought him.

The catastrophe is affecting. The father and daughter both culpable, both wretched, and both penitent, divide between them our pity and our sorrow.

Thus, madam, I have performed what I did not willingly undertake, and could not decently refuse. The noble writer will be pleased to remember, that sincere criticism ought to raise no resentment, because judgment is not under the control of will; but involuntary criticism, as it has still less of choice, ought to be more remote from possibility of offence. I am, &c.

LETTER CXVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Dec. 27, 1783.

Dear madam,

THE wearisome solitude of the long evenings did indeed suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

The time of the year, for I hope the fault is rather in the weather than in me, has been very hard upon me. The muscles of my breast are much convulsed. Dr. Heberden recommends opiates, of which I have such horror, that I do not

† “I could have borne my woes; that stranger Joy
Wounds while it smiles:—The long imprison'd wretch,
Emerging from the night of his damp cell,
Shrinks from the sun's bright beams; and that which flings
Gladness o'er all, to him is agony.”

think of them but *in extremes*. I was, however, driven to them last night for refuge, and, having taken the usual quantity, durst not go to bed, for fear of that uneasiness to which a supine posture exposes me, but rested all night in a chair with much relief, and have been to-day more warm, active, and cheerful.

You have more than once wondered at my complaint of solitude, when you hear that I am crowded with visits. *Inopem me copia fecit*. Visitors are no proper companions in the chamber of sickness. They come when I could sleep or read, they stay till I am weary, they force me to attend when my mind calls for relaxation, and to speak when my powers will hardly actuate my tongue. The amusements and consolations of languor and depression are conferred by familiar and domestic companions, which can be visited or called at will, and can occasionally be quitted or dismissed, who do not obstruct accommodation by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear lady, to you and my dear girls many a cheerful and pious Christmas. I am, your, &c.

LETTER CXIX.

From the same to the same.

London, Jan. 12, 1784.

Dear madam.

IF, as you observe, my former letter was written with trepidation, there is little reason, except the habit of enduring, why this should shew more steadiness. I am confined to the house; I do not know that any thing grows better; my physicians direct me to combat the hard weather with opium; I cannot well support its turbulence, and yet cannot forbear it, for its immediate effect is ease; having kept me waking all the night, it forces sleep upon me in the day, and recompenses a night of tediousness with a day of uselessness. My legs and my thighs grow very tumid: in the mean time my appetite is good, and if my physicians do not flatter me death is rushing upon me. But this is the hand of God.

The first talk of the sick is commonly of themselves; but if they talk of nothing

else, they cannot complain if they are soon left without an audience.

You observe, madam, that the balloon engages all mankind, and it is indeed a wonderful and unexpected addition to human knowledge; but we have a daring projector, who, disdaining the help of fumes and vapours, is making better than Dædalean wings, with which he will master the balloon and its companions as an eagle masters a goose. It is very seriously true, that a subscription of eight hundred pounds has been raised for the wire and workmanship of iron wings; one pair of which, and I think a tail, are now shewn in the Hay-market, and they are making another pair at Birmingham. The whole is said to weigh two hundred pounds—no specious preparation for flying; but there are those who expect to see him in the sky. When I can leave the house I will tell you more.

I had the same old friends to dine with me on Wednesday, and may say, that since I lost sight of you I have had one pleasant day. I am, madam, your, &c.

Pray send me a direction to sir — Musgrave in Ireland.

LETTER CXX.

From the same to the same.

London, Jan. 21, 1784.

Dear madam,

DR. HEBERDEN this day favoured me with a visit; and after hearing what I had to tell him of miseries and pains, and comparing my present with my past state, declared me well. That his opinion is erroneous, I know with too much certainty; and yet was glad to hear it, as it sets extremities at a greater distance: he, who is by his physician thought well, is at least not thought in immediate danger. They, therefore, whose attention to me makes them talk of my health, will, I hope, soon not drop, but lose their subject. But, alas! I had no sleep last night, and sit now panting over my paper. *Dabit Deus his quoque finem*. I have really hope from spring; and am ready, like Almanzor, to bid the sun fly swiftly, and leave weeks and months behind him. The sun has looked for six thousand years upon the world to little purpose, if he does not know that a sick man is almost as impatient as a lover.

Mr. Cator gives such an account of miss Ceezy, as you and all of us must delight to hear. Cator has a rough, manly, independent understanding, and does not spoil it by complaisance; he never speaks merely to please, and seldom is mistaken in things which he has any right to know. I think well of her for pleasing him, and of him for being pleased; and, at the close, am delighted to find him delighted with her excellence. Let your children, dear madam, be his care, and your pleasure: close your thoughts upon them; and, when sad fancies are excluded, health and peace will return together. I am, dear madam, your old friend.

LETTER CXXI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Feb. 9, 1784.

Dear madam,

THE remission of the cold did not continue long enough to afford me much relief. You are, as I perceive, afraid of the opium; I had the same terror, and admitted its assistance only under the pressure of insupportable distress, as of an auxiliary too powerful and too dangerous. But in this pinching season I cannot live without it; and the quantity which I take is less than it once was.

My physicians flatter me, that the season is a great part of my disease; and that when warm weather restores perspiration, this watery disease will evaporate. I am at least willing to flatter myself.

I have been forced to sit up many nights by an obstinate sleeplessness, which makes the time in bed intolerably tedious, and which continues my drowsiness the following day. Besides, I can sometimes sleep erect, when I cannot close my eyes in a recumbent posture. I have just bespoke a flannel dress, which I can easily slip off and on, as I go into bed, or get out of it. Thus pass my days and nights in morbid wakefulness, in unseasonable sleepiness, in gloomy solitude, with unwelcome visitors, or ungrateful exclusions, in variety of wretchedness. But I snatch every lucid interval, and animate myself with such amusements as the time offers.

One thing, which I have just heard, you will think to surpass expectation. The chaplain of the factory at Peters-

burg relates, that the Rambler is now, by the command of the empress, translating into Russian; and has promised, when it is printed, to send me a copy.

Grant, O Lord, that all, who shall read my pages, may become more obedient to thy laws; and when the wretched writer shall appear before thee, extend thy mercy to him, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen. I am, madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXXII.

Dr. Johnson to the Rev. Dr. Taylor, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

London, Easter-Monday, April 12, 1784.

Dear sir,

WHAT can be the reason that I hear nothing from you? I hope nothing disables you from writing. What I have seen, and what I have felt, gives me reason to fear every thing. Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing, that after all my losses I have got a friend left.

I want every comfort. My life is very solitary and very cheerless. Though it has pleased God wonderfully to deliver me from the dropsy, I am yet very weak, and have not passed the door since the 13th of December. I hope for some help from warm weather, which will surely come in time.

I could not have the consent of the physicians to go to church yesterday; I therefore received the Holy Sacrament at home, in the room where I communicated with dear Mrs. Williams, a little before her death. O, my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful. I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet, we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from God.

In the mean time, let us be kind to one another. I have no friend now living, but you and Mr. Hector, that was the friend of my youth. Do not neglect, dear sir, yours affectionately, &c.

LETTER CXXIII.

Dr. Johnson to Lord Chancellor Thurlow.

Sept. 1784.

My lord,

AFTER a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty so liberally bestowed I should gladly receive if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim: My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians, and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told of it by sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better I should not be willing, if much worse, not able to migrate.

Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet as I have had no long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mili carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit. I am, my lord, your lordship's most obliged, most grateful, and most humble servant.

LETTER CXXIV.

Miss —— to the Rev. Dr. Horne, President of Magdalen College, Oxford.*

Nov. 6.

My dear sir,

WITH a heart almost broken with grief, I am going, I fear, to trouble you by pouring it forth. I have lost my ——, my best friend, and every thing that was

* The writer of this letter was an elegant and accomplished young lady of the first distinction in Ireland, who had not completed her 17th year at the time of her father's death.

most valuable to me in the world! Perhaps, ere this, the melancholy tidings have reached your ear.

On Saturday morning last, the ——, he yielded his soul into the hands of his Maker. O, sir! paint to your imagination the woe and distraction that entered this house in the moment of his dissolution! Had you heard the piercing cries that were uttered! But what do I say? God forbid that your tender, your most affectionate heart should have been a witness of the scene!

I was hardly able to bear the thoughts of surviving him; but, thank God, I am in some degree composed. I most earnestly repent of my sin, in forgetting for a moment that from His hand I received good, and why not evil when he thought fit? Pray, sir, pardon the liberty I have taken in writing to you; but allow me to apologize in some measure, by telling you, that the day before my dearest —— grew ill, he desired me to write. As you may remember, he owed you a letter. "Perhaps," said he, smiling, "it may please the dear ——." You will, no doubt, wonder what could take him off so suddenly. It was a disorder on the brain; not water, but something occasioned by a fullness in the head. He died on the sixth day after he was seized. The day he was first affected he came down to breakfast; but alas! he had totally lost his senses. Think what I must have felt! The physicians all agreed, and all thought till the very last, that his bodily ailments were not fatal, but that his understanding was gone for ever. Was it not a blessing then that God did not ordain him to outlive himself! I have been since thinking, that I was permitted to see him in that most melancholy state to fill my heart with this subject of thankfulness.

And let me cast my thoughts on that most amazing and blessed change he has undergone; from a world of pains and vexations, at best, to join that blessed spirit, my dearest ——, and make one of that angelic choir that cease not day and night to sing their hallelujahs. How this idea transports me from the world! God grant it may influence my life; that, when I come to die, it may be the death of the righteous, which is only to be attained by living their life!

Will you be so kind as to present my most affectionate respects to —— and

your ——? You will break these most dismal tidings to them; I am sure they will sympathize in my affliction.

Perhaps, were I critically to trace the source of my troubling you with this letter, self might be found to be the cause. I flatter myself that you will favour me with a line to the afflicted. What consolation must flow from your pen! And suffer me to assure you, that, next to that dear parent who is laid in the dust, I have revered, loved, and honoured you. If you can pardon me for thus troubling you, and should wish to hear now and then how the mourners at —— go on, how happy would it make me to let you know! but this rests in your own power. I fear you will repent of your former condescension towards me, since this is the effect of it.

My poor —— is most deeply afflicted; my happiness must *now* rest upon his good conduct, and I think he will not disappoint me: thus, as one prop is withdrawn, the heart of man fondly clings to another.

Mrs. —— is getting much better. Ever since we came home this year we have been in daily expectation of her decease. Good God! what an amazement it is to her to find herself alive, surviving her ——! She bears it like a Christian; says, she need not take her leave, so soon to follow. Farewell, most honoured sir. Believe me to remain your most dutiful, most afflicted servant.

LETTER CXXV.

Dr. Horne, Dean of Canterbury, to Miss ——, in answer to the above.*

Canterbury, Nov. 11.

My dear madam,
LITTLE did I think a letter from —— would afflict my soul, but yours received this morning has indeed done it. Seeing your hand, and a black seal, my mind foreboded what had happened: I made an attempt to read it to my wife and daughters, but—— it would not do—I got no further than the first sentence, burst into a flood of tears, and was obliged to retreat into the solitude of my study, unfit for any thing, but to think on what had happened; then to fall upon my

* His lordship was at the time dean of Canterbury.

knees, and pray, that God would evermore pour down his choicest blessings on the children of my departed friend, and as their “father and their mother had forsaken them,” that He would “take them up,” and support them in time and eternity. Even so! Amen.

You ask comfort of me, but your truly excellent letter has suggested comfort to me, from all the proper topics; and I can only reflect it back to you again. All things considered, the circumstance which first marked the disorder may be termed a *gracious* dispensation. It at once rendered the event, one may say, *desirable*, which otherwise carried so much terror and sorrow in the face of it. Nothing else in the world could so soon and so effectually have blunted the edge of the approaching calamity, and reconciled to it minds full of the tenderest love and affection. To complete the consolation that only remained, which we all know to be the fact, Mr. —— stood always so prepared, so firm in his faith, so constant in his Christian practice of every duty, that he could not be taken by surprise, or off his guard: the stroke must be to himself a blessing, whenever, or however, it came. His death was his birth day; and, like the primitive Christians, we should keep it as such, as a day of joy and triumph. Bury his body, but embalm his example, and let it diffuse his fragrance among you from generation to generation. Call him blessed, and endeavour to be like him; like him in piety, in charity, in friendship, in courteousness, in temper, in conduct, in word, and in deed. His virtues compose a little volume, which your brother should carry in his bosom; and he will need no other, if that be well studied, to make him the gentleman and the Christian. You, my dear madam, will, I am sure, go on with diligence to finish the fair transcript you have begun, that the world around you may see, and admire.

Do not apologize for writing; but let me hear what you do, and what plan of life your brother thinks of pursuing. With kindest compliments from the sympathizing folks here, believe me, ever, my dear madam, your faithful friend and servant.

LETTER CXXVI.

*Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton,
at Hagley.*

London, Feb. 4, 1728.

Dear sir,

I AM mighty glad you have made choice of so agreeable a place as Lorrain to send me to. I shall be impatient to hear that you have got a servant for me, that my stay here may be the shorter: in the mean while, you may be sure, I shall not neglect to make the best use of my time.

I am proud that the D—— approves my verses; for her judgment does great honour to those that please her. The subject is Blenheim castle; I would have sent you a copy of them, but have not yet had time to transcribe them; you shall, therefore, receive them inclosed in my next letter.

The news you tell me of —— does not a little please me; whatever does him honour in your opinion is of advantage to me, as it will render the friendship that is between us more agreeable to you; for my satisfaction in his acquaintance has been always checked, by observing you had not that esteem for him as I could wish you might have for all my friends: but I hope he will deserve it better every day, and confirm himself in my good opinion by gaining yours.

I am glad that you are pleased with my Persian Letters, and criticism upon Voltaire; but, with submission to your judgment, I do not see how what I have said of Milton can destroy all poetical license. That term indeed has been so much abused, and the liberty it allows has been pleaded in defence of such extravagant fictions, that one would almost wish there were no such words. But yet this is no reason why good authors may not raise and animate their works with flights and sallies of imagination, provided they are cautious of restraining them within the bounds of justness and propriety; for nothing can license a poet to offend against Truth and Reason, which are as much the rules of the sublime as less exalted poetry. We meet with a thousand instances of the true nobleness of thought in Milton, where the liberty you contend for is made use of, and yet nature very strictly observed. It would be endless to point out the beauties of this

kind in the *Paradise Lost*, where the boldness of his genius appears without shocking us, with the least impropriety: we are surprised, we are warmed, we are transported; but we are not hurried out of our senses, or forced to believe impossibilities. The sixth book is, I fear, in many places, an exception to this rule; the *poetica licentia* is stretched too far, and the *just* is sacrificed to the *wonderful*; (you will pardon me, if I talk too much in the language of the schools.) To set this point in a clearer light, let us compare the fiction in *los Lusíados*, of the giant that appears to the Portuguese, and the battle of the angels in Milton. The storms, the thunders, and the lightnings, that hang about him, are proper and natural to that mountain he represents; we are pleased with seeing him thus armed, because there is nothing in the description that is not founded upon truth: but how do swords, and coats of mail, and cannons, agree with angels? Such a fiction can never be beautiful, because it wants probability to support it. We can easily imagine the Cape, extending its narrow arms over the sea, and guarding it from invaders; the tempests, that mariners always meet with upon that coast, render such a supposition very just: but with what grounds of reason can we suppose, that the angels, to defend the throne of God, threw mountains upon the heads of the rebel army?

*"Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis,
Numen eget."*

The liberty in one fable is restrained to nature and good sense; in the other, it is wild and unbounded, so as frequently to lose sight of both.—Pardon the freedom I have taken, to contradict your opinion and defend my own; for I shall be very ready to give it up to you, if after this you continue to think me in the wrong. It is prudent to argue with those who have such regard to our judgment as to correct it.

You ended a letter of good news very ill, in telling me that you had got the head-ach; I can have but very little pleasure in any thing, though it be ever so agreeable, when I know that you are ill. I am, dear sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXVII.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Luneville, July 8, 1728.

Dear sir,

I HEARTILY congratulate you upon my sister's marriage, and wish you may dispose of all your children as much to your satisfaction and their own. Would to God Mr. P— had a fortune equal to his brother's, that he might make a present of it to my pretty little M—! but unhappily they have neither of them any portion but an uncommon share of merit, which the world will not think them much the richer for. I condole with poor Mrs. — upon the abrupt departure of her intended husband; to be sure, she takes it much to heart; for the loss of an only lover, when a lady is past three-and-twenty, is as afflicting as the loss of an only child after fifty-five.

You tell me my mother desires a particular journal of my travels, and the remarks I have made upon them, after the manner of the sage Mr. Bromley. Alas! I am utterly unfit for so great a work; my genius is light and superficial, and lets slip a thousand observations which would make a figure in his book. It requires much industry and application, as well as a prodigious memory, to know how many houses there are in Paris; how many vestments in a procession; how many saints in the Romish Calendar, and how many miracles to each saint; and yet to such a pitch of exactness the curious travellers must arrive, who would imitate Mr. Bromley. Not to mention the pains he must be at in examining all the tombs in a great church, and faithfully transcribing the inscriptions, though they had no better author than the sexton or curate of the parish. For my part, I was so shamefully negligent as not to set down how many crosses are in the road from Calais to Luneville; nay, I did not so much as take an inventory of the relics in the churches I went to see. You may judge by this what a poor account I shall give you of my travels, and how ill the money is bestowed that you spent upon them. But, however, if my dear mother insists upon it, I shall have so much complaisance for the curiosity natural to her sex, as to write her a particular of what rarities I have seen;

but of all ordinary spectacles, such as miracles, raree-shows, and the like, I beg her permission to be silent. I am, dear sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Luneville, July 21.

Dear sir,

I THANK you for so kindly forgiving the piece of negligence I acquainted you of in my last. Young fellows are often guilty of voluntary forgetfulness in those affairs; but, I assure you, mine was quite accidental. Mr. D— tells you true, that I am weary of losing money at cards; but it is no less certain, that without them I shall soon be weary of Lorraine. The spirit of quadrille has possessed the land from morning till midnight; there is nothing else in every house in town.

This court is fond of strangers, but with a proviso that strangers love quadrille. Would you win the hearts of the maids of honour, you must lose your money at quadrille; would you be thought a well-bred man, you must play genteelly at quadrille; would you get a reputation of good sense, shew judgment at quadrille; however, in summer, one may contrive to pass a day without quadrille; because there are agreeable promenades, and little parties out of doors; but in the winter you are reduced to play at it, or sleep like a fly till the return of spring. Indeed in the morning the duke hunts; but my malicious stars have so contrived it, that I am no more a sportsman than a gamester. There are no men of learning in the whole country; on the contrary, it is a character they despise. A man of quality caught me the other day reading a Latin author; and asked me with an air of contempt, whether I was designed for the church. All this would be tolerable, if I was not doomed to converse with a set of English, who are still more ignorant than the French; and from whom, with my utmost endeavours, I cannot be absent six hours in the day. Lord — is the only one among them who has common sense; and he is so scandalously debauched in his principles as well as practice, that his conversation is equally shocking to my morals and my reason.

My only improvement here is in the company of the duke and prince Craon, and in the exercise of the academy: I have been absent from the last near three weeks, by reason of a sprain I got in the sinews of my leg, which is not yet quite recovered. My duty to my dear mother; I hope you and she continue well. I am, sir, your dutiful son.

LETTER CXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Luneville, August 18.

Dear sir,

I WROTE to you last post, and have since received yours of the 20th. Your complaints pierce my heart. Alas! sir, what pain must it give me to think that my improvement put you to any degree of inconvenience? And perhaps, after all, I may return, and not answer your expectations. This thought gives me so much uneasiness, that I am ready to wish you would recal me, and save the charge of travelling: but, no; the world would judge perversely, and blame you for it; I must go on, and you must support me like your son.

I have observed, with extreme affliction, how much your temper is altered of late, and your cheerfulness of mind impaired. My heart has ached within me, when I have seen you giving yourself up to a melancholy diffidence, which makes you fear the worst in every thing, and seldom indulge those pleasing hopes which support and nourish us. O my dear sir, how happy shall I be, if I am able to restore you to your former gaiety! People, that knew you some years ago, say that you was the most cheerful man alive. How much beyond the possession of any mistress will be the pleasure I shall experience, if by marrying well, I can make you such once more! This is my wish, my ambition, the prayer I make to Heaven as often as I think on my future life. But, alas! I hope for it in vain, if you suffer your cares and inquietudes to destroy your health; what will avail my good intentions, if they are frustrated by your death? You will leave this world without ever knowing whether the promises of your son were the language of a grateful heart, or the lying protesta-

tions of a hypocrite: God in Heaven forbid it should be so! May he preserve your health, and prolong your days, to receive a thousand proofs of the lasting love and duty of the most obliged of children! We are all bound to you, sir, and will, I trust, repay it in love and honour of you. Let this support and comfort you, that you are the father of ten children, among whom there seems to be but one soul of love and obedience to you. This is a solid, real good, which you will feel and enjoy, when other pleasures have lost their taste: your heart will be warmed by it in old age, and you will find yourself richer in these treasures than in the possession of all you have spent upon us. I talk, sir, from the fulness of my heart; and it is not the style of a dissembler. Do not, my dear sir, suffer melancholy to gain too far upon you: think less of those circumstances which disquiet you, and rejoice in the many others which ought to gladden you: consider the reputation you have acquired, the glorious reputation of integrity, so uncommon in this age! Imagine that your posterity will look upon it as the noblest fortune you can leave them, and that your children's children will be incited to virtue by your example. I do not know, sir, whether you feel this; I am sure I do, and glory in it. Are you not happy in my dear mother? Was ever wife so virtuous, so dutiful, so fond? There is no satisfaction beyond this, and I know you have a perfect sense of it. All these advantages, well weighed, will make your misfortunes light; and, I hope, the pleasure arising from them will dispel that cloud which hangs upon you, and sinks your spirits. I am, dear sir, your dutiful son.

LETTER CXXX.

From the same to the same.

Soissons, Nov. 20.

Dear sir,

THIS is one of the agreeablest towns in France. The people are infinitely obliging to strangers. We are of all their parties, and perpetually share with them in their pleasures. I have learnt more French since I came here, than I should have picked up in a twelvemonth

at Lorrain. The desire of a further progress and improvement in that tongue has led me into some thoughts relating to the continuation of my travels, which I beg leave to lay before you.

If you send me to Italy next spring, as you once designed to do, one great inconvenience will arise, *viz.* that, before I am perfect in speaking French, I must apply myself to Italian, from which it may probably come to pass, that I shall not know much of either. I should, therefore, think it more for my advantage to make the tour of France before I set out for Italy, than after I come back.

There is another reason, which at least will weigh with my dear mother; that is, that, after the month of May, when the violent heats begin, Rome (where it will be necessary to settle first, upon account of the purity of the language, which is spoke corruptly in other places) is so unwholesome as to endanger the life of any foreigner unaccustomed to that air; and therefore most travellers go thither about September, and leave it towards April. I fancy these two objections to the foregoing scheme will incline you rather to give into mine, which is as follows: Suppose I stay here till after February; I may in March, April, May, and June see Orleans, Lyons, and Bourdeaux; and pass July, August, and September, in the southern provinces. The air of those countries is so pure, that the greatest heats do nobody any harm. From Provence to Genoa is the shortest road I can take for Italy, and so through Tuscany to Rome, where I shall arrive about December, having seen what is curious in my way.

I may pass two months at Rome, and go from thence to Naples, the most delightful part of Italy, and the finest air; allowing me three months in that country, I may take a little voyage to Messina, and from thence to Malta, which lays just by. From Naples I may travel along the coasts of the Adriatic Sea, by Ancona and Loretta, to Venice; where, if I stay but to the end of July, I shall have August, September, and October, to see Padua, Verona, Milan, and the other parts of Italy that lie N. W. of the Venetian Gulf. In the winter I may settle at Sienna, where there is a good academy, and where they are not trou-

bled with any English. From thence I may go to Turin, if you please, and stay there till April. After which, to avoid returning through Provence a second time, I may go by Lauzanne and Berne to Franche Compté, and so by Dijon to Paris. When I am there, it will be wholly in your breast how long you would have me stay abroad, and whether I should come home the shortest way, or have the pleasure of seeing Holland. This, sir, is the plan that I offer to you; which, I hope, you will approve of in the main, and agree to for me. I do not pretend to have laid it so exact as never to depart from it; but I am persuaded that, generally speaking, I shall find it agreeable and commodious. I have not brought Lorrain into it, because it lies quite out of the way, and because (to say the truth) I am unwilling to go thither. I know, my dear sir, I should acquaint you with my reasons for the dislike I have expressed against that place. This is not so easy an *eclaircissement* as you may think it. Our notions of places and of persons depend upon a combination of circumstances, many of which are in themselves minute, but have weight from their assemblage with the rest. Our minds are like our bodies: they owe their pain or pleasure to the good or ill assortment of a thousand causes, each of which is a trifle by itself. How small and imperceptible are the qualities in the air, or soil, or climate, where we live; and yet how sensible are the impressions they make upon us, and the delights or uneasiness they create! So it is with our minds, from the little accidents that concur to soothe or to disorder them. But in both, the impressions are more strong, as the frames which they act upon are more delicate and refined. I must therefore impute many of my complaints to the natural delicacy of my temper; and, I flatter myself, you will not think that reason the worst I could have given you. But there are others, more gross and evident, which I have already in part informed you of, and which I shall here set forth more at large.

It is natural for us to hate the school in which we take the first lessons of any art. The reason is, that the awkwardness we have shewn in such beginnings lessens us in the eyes of people

there, and the disadvantageous prejudice it has given of us is never quite to be got over.

Luneville was my school of breeding, and I was there more unavoidably subject to *quelques belles d'ecolier*, as the *politesse* practised in that place is fuller of ceremony than elsewhere, and has a good deal peculiar to itself.

The memory of these mistakes, though lost perhaps in others, hangs upon my mind when I am there, and depresses my spirits to such a degree, that I am not like myself. One is never agreeable in company where one fears too much to be disapproved; and the very notion of being ill received has as bad an effect upon our gaiety as the thing itself. This is the first and strongest reason why I despair of being happy in Lorrain. I have already complained of the foppish ignorance and contempt for all I have been taught to value, that is so fashionable there. You have heard me describe the greater part of the English I knew there, in colours that ought to make you fear the infection of such company for your son.

But, supposing no danger in this brutal, unimproving society, it is no little grievance; for to what barbarous insults does it expose our morals and understanding! A fool, with a majority on his side, is the greatest tyrant in the world. Do not imagine, dear sir, that I am setting up for a reformer of mankind, because I express some impatience at the folly and immorality of my acquaintance. I am far from expecting they should all be wits, much less philosophers. My own weaknesses are too well known to me, not to prejudice me in favour of other people's when they go but to a certain point. There are extravagances that have always an excuse, sometimes a grace attending them. Youth is agreeable in its sallies, and would lose its beauty if it looked too grave; but a reasonable head and an honest heart are never to be dispensed with. Not that I am so severe upon Luneville and my English friends, as to pretend there are not men of merit and good sense among them. There are some undoubtedly; but all I know are uneasy at finding themselves in such ill company. I shall trouble you no farther upon this head. If you enter into my way of thinking, what I

have said will be enough: if you do not, all I can say will have no effect. I should not have engaged in this long detail, but that I love to open my heart to you, and make you the confident of all my thoughts. Till I have the honour and happiness of conversing with you in a nearer manner, indulge me, dear sir, in this distant way of conveying my notions to you, and let me talk to you as I would to my dearest friend, without awe, correctness, or reserve. Though I have taken up so much of your time before, I cannot help giving myself the pleasure of acquainting you of the extraordinary civilities I receive from Mr. Poyntz. He has in a manner taken me into his family. I have the honour of his conversation at all hours, and he delights to turn it to my improvement. He was so good as to desire me to ask your leave to pass the winter with him, and to encourage me to do it, promised me that I should not be without my share of public business. The first packet that comes from Fountainbleau I expect to be employed; which is no small pleasure to me, and will, I hope, be of service.

Do not you think, sir, it would be proper for you to write to Mr. Poyntz, to thank him for the honours he has done me; and to desire him to excuse it, if his civilities make me troublesome to him longer than you designed? You know so well how to do those things, that I am persuaded it would have a good effect.

The only news I have to tell you, is a secret intelligence from Vienna, that count Zinzerdorff is going out of favour; this is of consequence to the negotiations, but you must not mention it: while I am not trusted with affairs you shall know all I hear; but afterwards *nil patri quidem*. I was saying to Mr. Poyntz, that Ripperda was undoubtedly very happy to come out of prison into the land of liberty; he replied, that, whatever the duke might think, he was in danger of going to prison again.

This was said some time ago, and things may have altered since. I remain, dear sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXXI.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Paris, Jan. 22, 1729.

Dear sir,

I HAVE so much to thank you for, that I have not words to do it; so kind a compliance with all my wishes surpasses my acknowledgment. Your two letters to Mr. Poyntz had their effect, and were answered with a profusion of civilities, and marks of friendship and esteem; but the enclosed will instruct you better in the obligations I have to you and him. How happy I am in your permission to quit Lorraine, you may judge by my letter on that head. I think you have mistaken my sense in some arguments made use of there; but it is needless to set you right. Your kindness and indulgence to my desires is an argument more persuasive than all the rest, and in which only I confide.

I have lately, sir, spent more than I could wish, and the necessity of doing it gives me no small uneasiness; but it is an undoubted fact, that without shew abroad there is no improvement. You yourself confess it, when you say, the French are only fond of strangers who have money to pay them for their compliments. You express a great uneasiness, for fear I should grow fond of games of chance. I have sometimes risked a little at them, but without any passion or delight. Gaming is too unreasonable and dishonest for a gentleman, who has either sense or honour, to addict himself to it; but, to set you quite easy in that point, I give you my word and honour, and desire no pardon if I recede from it, that I never will addict myself to this destructive passion, which is such a whirlpool, that it absorbs all others. It is true I have been a sufferer at quadrille, and must ever suffer on: for *point de société sans cela; c'est un article préliminaire d tout commerce avec le beau monde*. I may venture to assure you, that all thoughts of peace are not laid aside, as you apprehend. I remain, dear sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXXII.

S. Poyntz, Esq. to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Paris, Jan. 22, 1729.

Sir,

I HAVE received your two kind letters, in which you are pleased very much to overvalue the small civilities it has lain in my power to show Mr. Lyttleton. I have more reason to thank you, sir, for giving me so convincing a mark of your regard, as to interrupt the course of his travels on my account, which will lay me under a double obligation to do all I can towards making his stay agreeable and useful to him; though I shall still remain the greater gainer by the pleasure of his company, which no services of mine can sufficiently requite. He is now in the same house with me, and by that means more constantly under my eye than even at Soissons: but I should be very unjust to him, if I left you under the imagination, that his inclinations stand in the least need of any such ungenerous restraint. Depend upon it, sir, from the observation of one who would abhor to deceive a father in so tender a point, that he retains the same virtuous and studious dispositions, which nature and your care planted in him, only strengthened and improved by age and experience; so that, I dare promise you, the bad examples of Paris, or any other place, will never have any other effect upon him, but to confirm him in the right choice he has made. Under these happy circumstances, he can have little occasion for any other advice, but that of sustaining the character he has so early got, and of supporting the hopes he has raised. I wish it were in my power to do him any part of the service you suppose me capable of. I shall not be wanting to employ him, as occasion offers; and to assist him with my advice where it may be necessary, though your cares (which he ever mentions with the greatest gratitude) have made this task very easy. He cannot fail of making you and himself happy, and of being a great ornament to our country, if, with that refined taste and delicacy of genius, he can but recal his mind, at a proper age, from the pleasures of learning, and gay scenes of imagination, to the dull road and fatigue of business. This I have sometimes taken

the liberty to hint to him, though his own good judgment made it very unnecessary.

Though I have only the happiness of knowing you, sir, by your reputation, and by this common object of our friendship and affections, your son; I beg you would be persuaded that I am, with the most particular respect, sir, your most humble and obedient servant, &c.

LETTER CXXXIII.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Paris, Feb. 17.

Dear sir,

I MADE your compliments to Mr. Poyntz as handsomely as I could, and read him that part of your letter, where you leave it to his determination how long I shall stay with him, provided it be no ways inconvenient. He assured me, with the same obliging air of sincerity and goodness as you are charmed with in his letter, that it was not in the least so; and that my company again at Soissons would be the greatest relief and pleasure to him; with many other kind expressions, which you would be glad to hear, but which I cannot repeat. I have a thousand thanks to pay you, sir, for so kindly preventing my desires, and continuing me in the possession of a happiness, which I was afraid was almost at an end. The time I spend with Mr. Poyntz is certainly the most agreeable, as well as the most improving, part of my life. He is a second father to me, and it is in his society that I am least sensible of the want of yours.

I find you are uneasy at the situation the king's speech has left us in; but depend upon it, notwithstanding the little triumph that the enemies of the government may shew upon the present seeming uncertainty of affairs, they will be concluded to their confusion, and to the honour of the councils they oppose. The greatest mischief that has been done us, and which perhaps you are not sensible of, was full of false and malicious insinuations, which, being translated and shewn to foreign ministers, unacquainted with the lenity of our constitution and the liberty of scandal it allows, made them think that the nation would disavow the measures taken by the court,

and were the principal cause of the delays and difficulties that retard the public peace. The vigorous resolutions of both houses, to support his majesty in his councils, will, no doubt, undeceive them, and contribute very much to bring affairs to that decision we desire. Adieu, my dear sir; and believe me to be your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Paris, March 11.

Dear sir,

THE affair of the Gosport man-of-war has raised a most extravagant spirit of resentment in the French. They talk of nothing less than hanging their own officer, and seem to expect that ours should come off as ill. I have talked to his excellency about it: he says he has had no account of it from England; but desires me to tell you, that he is in hopes the French officer has made a false report; and that, if nothing very extraordinary has been done, as the case must have happened frequently, he should think it very proper, that as many precedents as can be found should be collected and sent him over. He apprehends, as much as you, a popular declamation from the Craftsman on this unlucky subject. The embarkation you speak of is uncertain (as far as I can know from him), and intended only to reinforce our garrisons. Perhaps there may be more in it, which he does not think fit to trust me with, though I hardly imagine so; because I have such marks of his confidence as convince me he does not doubt of my discretion.

Love to my brother ———; I dare say he will be a gainer in the end by this warm action, though it happened to be ill-timed. I am glad the young fellow has so much of the martial spirit in him. What you tell me of ——— amazes me. I shall obey your advice, in being cautious how I think any man my friend too soon; since he, whose affection I was so sure of, has so injuriously convinced me of my mistake. I confess, I thought malice or ill-nature as great strangers to him as to poor ———; but what are the judgments of young

men? Indeed, my dear sir, we are very silly fellows.

I cannot help transcribing a few lines of my sister's letter of the 10th, to shew you that your goodness to your children meets at least with a grateful return:—

“We should pass our time but ill, if the good-humour of my mother did not make us all cheerful, and make amends for the loss of those diversions, which London would afford us. The oftener I converse with her, the more I love her; and every one of her actions shews me a virtue I wish to imitate. This you must be sensible of as well as I: but there is such a pleasure in praising those we love, that I must dwell a little upon the subject, which, I dare say, will be as grateful to you as it is to me. How happy are we with such parents! When I see my father almost spent with the cares of his family; my dear mother confined here, for the good of her children; I am overpowered with gratitude and love! May you and they continue well! and I want nothing else to complete my happiness.”

This, sir, is a faithful extract, and speaks the language of all our hearts. Adieu, dear sir. I remain your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXXV.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Haute Fontaine, near Soissons, May 27.

Dear sir,

I HAVE letters from my lord —— and his governor, in which they both express the highest sense of the friendship you have shewn them, and acknowledge the advantages they owe to it; my lord, particularly, is charmed with the good-natured service you did his relation, and speaks of it as the greatest obligation. My friend Ascough too boasts of your protection, and professes that veneration for your character, that it makes me proud of being your son. It is now my duty to return you thanks for all these favours bestowed on others, and meant to me; and I do it with all the pleasure of a grateful mind, which finds itself honoured in the obligation. I believe, there is no young man alive, who has more happiness to boast of than myself; being blessed with a sound

constitution, affectionate friends, and an easy fortune; but of all my advantages, there is none of which I have so deep a sense as the trust and amiable harmony between the best of fathers and myself.

This is so much the dearer to me, as indeed it is the source of all the rest; and as it is not to be lost by misfortune, but dependent upon my own behaviour, and annexed to virtue, honour, and reputation, I am persuaded, that no weaknesses or failings, which do not injure them, will occasion the withdrawing it from me; and therefore I consider it as secure, because I have used my mind to look upon dishonesty and shame as strangers it can never be acquainted with: such an opinion is not vanity, but it is setting those two things at a necessary distance from us; for it is certain, that the allowing a possibility of our acting wickedly, or meanly, is really making the first step towards it. I have received many civilities from Mr. Stanhope, who is here with Mr. Poyntz. Mr. Walpole has invited me to Compeigne, where I am going for two or three days. Affairs are now almost at a crisis, and there is great reason to expect they will take a happy turn. Mr. Walpole has a surprising influence over the cardinal; so that whether peace or war ensue, we may depend upon our ally. In truth, it is the interest of the French court to be faithful to their engagements, though it may not entirely be the nation's. Emulation of trade might incline the people to wish the bond that ties them to us were broke; but the mercantile interest has at no time been much considered by this court. If you reflect upon the apprehensions of the government from the side of Spain, and their very reasonable jealousy of the emperor, you will not wonder at their managing the friendship, and adhering to the alliance of Great Britain. The supposition, that present advantage is the basis and end of state engagements, and that they are only to be measured by that rule, is the foundation of all our suspicions against the firmness of our French ally. But the maxim is not just. Much is given to future hopes; much obtained by future fears; and security is, upon many occasions, sought preferably to gain. I remain, dear sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER CXXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Paris, Sept. 8.

Dear sir,

SUNDAY, by four o'clock, we had the good news of a dauphin, and since that time I have thought myself in Bedlam. The natural gaiety of the nation is so improved on this occasion, that they are all stark mad with joy, and do nothing but dance and sing about the streets by hundreds and by thousands. The expressions of their joy are admirable: one fellow gives notice to the public, that he designs to draw teeth for a week together upon the Pont Neuf, *gratis*. The king is as proud of what he has done, as if he had gained a kingdom; and tells every body that he sees, *qu'il sçaura bien faire des fils tant qu'il voudra*. We are to have a fine fire-work to-morrow, his majesty being to sup in town.

The duke of Orleans was sincerely, and without any affectation, transported at the birth of the dauphin.

The succession was a burthen too heavy for his indolence to support, and he piously sings hallelujah for his happy delivery from it. The good old cardinal cried for joy.

It is very late, and I have not slept these three nights for the squibs and crackers, and other noises that the people make in the streets, so must beg leave to conclude, with assuring that I am, dear sir, your affectionate and dutiful son.

LETTER CXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

Paris, Oct. 6.

Dear sir,

I HAVE the greatest thanks to return you for the many proofs of confidence and affection you gave me in your last, and shall labour to deserve that goodness, which is so kind and complaisant to my desires. I shall, in obedience to your orders, set out for Italy to-morrow, where I hope to make such improvements as will answer the expense of the journey; but, whatever advantage or pleasure I may propose, I cannot, without a sensible affliction, take leave

of my dear friend, Mr. Poyntz, of whose favours to me I have so deep a sense, that I cannot too often express my acknowledgments. The time I have enjoyed his company has been spent so happily, and so much to my honour and advantage, that I do not know how to reconcile my thoughts to a period of it. It is not so much the liveliness of his wit, and uncommon strength of his judgment, that charm me in his conversation, as those great and noble sentiments, which would have been admired by ancient Rome, and have done honour to the most virtuous ages.

He is going to his country-seat; where I hope the air, and a little repose from the fatigue of business, will entirely restore his health. I shall observe your caution against grapes, new wine, and pretty women, though they are all very tempting, but dangerous things.

I have time for no more now, but to assure you of my duty and affection. I have written to my lord Cobham upon my going to Italy. His excellency thanks you for your letter, and will write to you as soon as he gets to Haute Fontaine. I have the pleasure of being able to assure you, that the final project of a treaty sent to Spain is entirely satisfactory and honourable, and that it contains a full redress and reparation for all abuses, grievances, and wrongs. I am, dear sir, with due respect, your most dutiful son.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

S. Poyntz, Esq. to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Haute Fontaine, Oct. 18.

Sir,

MR. LYTTLETON will have acquainted you with my removing to this place, the day before he left Paris, for the benefit of the air, and exercise of the country, which has almost restored me to health. The first use I make of it, sir, is to return you my sincere thanks, for making me so long happy in his good company; which I may with great truth say, has contributed more than any thing else to make the tediousness of this splendid banishment supportable to me, and to soften the impressions which the many perverse turns of the negotiations must

have made upon my mind. I wish it had been in my power to make equal returns: his good-nature disposes him to over-value them, such as they were; but I can only hope that our future acquaintance may afford me an opportunity of discharging some part of the debt.

His behaviour has continued the same as I described it last winter; and I am morally sure will never alter, in any country, or any part of life, for the worse. His health is liable to frequent interruptions, though not dangerous ones, nor of any long continuance. They seem to proceed chiefly from an ill digestion, which, I believe, may sometimes be occasioned by the vivacity of his imagination's pursuing some agreeable thought too intensely, and diverting the spirits from their proper function, even at meals; for we have often been obliged at that time to recal him from *reveries*, that made him almost absent to his company, though without the least tincture of melancholy.

I mention this last circumstance as a peculiar felicity of his temper; melancholy and spleen being the rock on which minds of so delicate a texture as his are most in danger of splitting. I have seen two or three instances of it myself in young gentlemen of the greatest hopes; and the epistles written by Languett, to sir Philip Sidney, upon an acquaintance, contracted, like ours, abroad, bring his particular case to my mind.

No young gentleman ever promised more; but, returning to England, conscious of his own worth, and full of more refined notions of honour, virtue, and friendship, than were to be met with in courts and parliaments, and in that mixed herd of men with whom business must be transacted, he conceived a total disgust for the world; and, retiring into the country, sat down with patience to consume the vigour of his imagination and youth in writing a trifling romance. I can, with pleasure, assure you, that I see no symptom of this kind in Mr. Lyttleton; his mind is ever cheerful and active, and full of such a benevolence towards his friends and relations in England, as well as such zeal for the honour and interests of his country, as, I verily believe, will never let him sink down into indolence and inaction. How-

ever, this sickness of the mind, and an ill state of bodily health, which naturally influence and promote one the other, are the two points most necessary to guard against, in a nature the most exempt from faults I ever met with.

I ought to ask pardon for indulging this liberty, if I were not writing to the best of fathers; though this very circumstance makes all my care superfluous. But the friendship your son has expressed for me ever since his being here, and more particularly in my late illness, and at parting, is too strong upon my mind, to suffer me to suppress any hint that may be of the most distant use to him, or may convince you of the sincerity of that respect with which I am, sir, your most humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CXXXIX.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Jan. 17, 1747.

Dear sir,

It is a most sensible and painful addition to my concern and affliction for my dear wife, to hear of your being so bad with the stone; and, loaded as my heart is with my other grief, I cannot help writing this, to tell you how much I feel for you, and how ardently I pray to God to relieve you.

Last night all my thoughts were employed on you; for, when I went to bed, my poor Lucy was so much better, that we thought her in a fair way of recovery; but my uneasiness for you kept me awake great part of the night, and, in the morning, I found she had been much worse again, so that our alarm was as great as ever: she has since mended again, and is now pretty near as you heard last post; only that such frequent relapses give one more cause to fear, that the good symptoms, which sometimes appear, will not be lasting. On the other hand, by her struggling so long, and her pulse recovering itself so well as it does, after such violent flurries and such great sinkings, one would hope that nature is strong in her, and will be able at last to conquer her illness.

Sir Edward Hulse seems now inclined to trust to *that*, and to trouble her with

no more physic; upon which condition alone she has been persuaded to take any food to-day. Upon the whole, her case is full of uncertainty, and the doctors can pronounce nothing positively about her; but they rather think it will be an affair of time. For my own health, it is yet tolerably good, though my heart has gone through as severe a trial as it can well sustain; more indeed than I thought it could have borne: and you may depend upon it, dear sir, that I will make use of all the supports that religion or reason can give me, to save me from sinking under it. I know the part you take in my life and health; and I know it my duty to try not to add to your other pains that of my loss, which thought has as great an effect upon me as any thing can; and I believe God Almighty supports me above my own strength, for the sake of my friends who are concerned for me, and in return for the resignation with which I endeavour to submit to his will. If it please him, in his infinite mercy, to restore my dear wife to me, I shall most thankfully acknowledge his goodness; if not, I shall most humbly endure his chastisement, which I have too much deserved.

These are the sentiments with which my mind is replete; but, as it is still a most bitter cup, how my body will bear it, if it must not pass from me, it is impossible for me to foretel; but I hope the best. I once more pray God to relieve you from that dreadful distemper with which you are afflicted.

Gilbert West would be happy in the reputation his book has gained him, if my poor Lucy was not so ill. However, his mind leans always to hope; which is an advantage both to him and me, as it makes him a better comforter. To be sure we ought not yet to despair; but there is much to fear, and a most melancholy interval to be supported, before any certainty comes—God send it may come well at last! I am, dear sir, your most afflicted, but most affectionate son.

LETTER CXL.

The late Bishop Horne to a young Clergyman.

Dear _____,

I AM much pleased to hear you have been for some time stationary at Oxford; a place where a man may best prepare himself to go forth as a burning and shining light into a world where charity is waxed cold, and where truth is well-nigh obscured. Whenever it pleases God to appoint you to the government of a parish, you will find work enough to employ you; and therefore, before that time comes, you should be careful to provide yourself with all necessary knowledge, lest, by-and-by, when you should be building, you should have your materials to look for, and bring together; besides, that the habit of studying and thinking, if it be not got in the first part of life, rarely comes afterwards. A man is miserably drawn into the eddy of worldly dissipation, and knows not how to get out of it again, till, in the end, for want of spiritual exercises, the faculties of the soul are benumbed, and he sinks into indolence, till *the night cometh, when no man can work*. Happy, therefore, is the man, who betimes acquires a relish for holy solitude, and accustoms himself to bear the yoke of Christ's discipline in his youth; who can sit alone, and keep silence, and seek wisdom diligently where she may be found, in the Scriptures of faith, and in the writings of the saints. From these flowers of Paradise he extracts the honey of knowledge and divine love, and therewith fills every cell of his understanding and affections. The winter of affliction, disease, and old age, will not surprise such an one in an unprepared state. *He will not be confounded in the perilous time; and in the days of dearth he will have enough to strengthen, comfort, and support him and his brethren*. Precious beyond rubies are the hours of youth and health! Let none of them pass unprofitably away; for surely they make to themselves wings, and are as a bird cutting swiftly the air, and the trace of her can no more be found. If well spent, they fly to heaven with news that rejoice angels, and meet us again as witnesses for us at the tribunal of our Lord. When the graces of time run into the glories of eternity, how

trifling will the labour then seem that has procured us (through grace) everlasting rest, for which the apostles toiled night and day, and the martyrs loved not their lives unto death!

These, my dear ———, are my sentiments; would to God my practice were more conformable to them than it is, that I might be less unworthy to advise and exhort others! but I trust the persuasion I have of the truth of what is said above (which every day's experience more and more confirms) will influence my conduct in this particular, and make me more watchful in time to come. In the mean season, I cannot forbear pressing the same upon you, as I should do with my dying breath; since, upon the due proportioning and employing our time, all our progress in grace and knowledge depends.

If there be any thing with regard to the choice or matter of your studies, in which I can assist you, let me know, as you can have no doubt of my being, in all things, most affectionately yours.

FROM THE

LETTERS OF WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

LETTER CXLI.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Huntingdon, June 24, 1765.

Dear Joe,

THE only recompence I can make you for your kind attention to my affairs, during my illness, is to tell you, that by the mercy of God I am restored to perfect health, both of mind and body. This, I believe, will give you pleasure, and I would gladly do any thing from which you could receive it.

I left St. Alban's on the seventeenth, and arrived that day at Cambridge, spent some time there with my brother, and came hither on the twenty-second. I have a lodging that puts me continually in mind of our summer excursions; we have had many worse, and except the size of it (which however is sufficient for

a single man) but few better. I am not quite alone, having brought a servant with me from St. Alban's, who is the very mirror of fidelity and affection for his master. And whereas the Turkish Spy says, he kept no servant because he would not have an enemy in his house, I hired mine because I would have a friend. Men do not usually bestow these encomiums on their lackeys, nor do they usually deserve them; but I have had experience of mine, both in sickness and in health, and never saw his fellow.

The river Ouse (I forget how they spell it) is the most agreeable circumstance in this part of the world; at this town it is I believe as wide as the Thames at Windsor: nor does the silver Thames better deserve that epithet, nor has it more flowers upon its banks, these being attributes, which, in strict truth, belong to neither. Fluellen would say, they are as like as my fingers to my fingers, and there is salmon in both. It is a noble stream to bathe in, and I shall make that use of it three times a week, having introduced myself to it for the first time this morning.

I beg you will remember me to all my friends, which is a task will cost you no great pains to execute—particularly remember me to those of your own house, and believe me your very affectionate.

LETTER CXLII.

To Lady Hesketh.

July 12, 1765.

My dear cousin,

You are very good to me, and if you will only continue to write at such intervals as you find convenient, I shall receive all that pleasure, which I proposed to myself from our correspondence. I desire no more than that you would never drop me for any length of time together, for I shall then think you only write because something happened to put you in mind of me, or for some other reason equally mortifying. I am not however so unreasonable as to expect you should perform this act of friendship so frequently as myself; for you live in a world swarming with engagements, and my hours are almost all my own. You must every day be employed in doing

what is expected from you by a thousand others, and I have nothing to do but what is most agreeable to myself.

Our mentioning Newton's Treatise on the Prophecies, brings to my mind an anecdote of Dr. Young, who you know died lately at Welwyn. Dr. Cotton, who was intimate with him, paid him a visit about a fortnight before he was seized with his last illness. The old man was then in perfect health; the antiquity of his person, the gravity of his utterance, and the earnestness with which he discoursed about religion, gave him, in the Doctor's eye, the appearance of a prophet. They had been delivering their sentiments upon this book of Newton, when Young closed the conference thus:—"My friend, there are two considerations upon which my faith in Christ is built as upon a rock: the fall of man, the redemption of man, and the resurrection of man, the three cardinal articles of our religion, are such as human ingenuity could never have invented, therefore they must be divine. The other argument is this—If the prophecies have been fulfilled (of which there is abundant demonstration), the Scripture must be the word of God; and if the Scripture is the word of God, Christianity must be true."

This treatise on the Prophecies serves a double purpose: it not only proves the truth of religion, in a manner that never has been, nor ever can be controverted; but it proves likewise, that the Roman Catholic is the apostate and anti-christian church, so frequently foretold both in the Old and New Testaments. Indeed so fatally connected is the refutation of Popery with the truth of Christianity, when the latter is evinced by the completion of the prophecies, that in proportion as light is thrown upon the one, the deformities and errors of the other are more plainly exhibited. But I leave you to the book itself: there are parts of it which may possibly afford you less entertainment than the rest, because you have never been a school-boy; but in the main it is so interesting, and you are so fond of that which is so, that I am sure you will like it.

My dear cousin,—how happy am I in having a friend, to whom I can open my heart upon these subjects! I have many intimates in the world, and have had many more than I shall have hereafter,

to whom a long letter, upon these most important articles, would appear tiresome at least, if not impertinent. But I am not afraid of meeting with that reception from you, who have never yet made it your interest, that there should be no truth in the word of God. May this everlasting truth be your comfort while you live, and attend you with peace and joy in your last moments! I love you too well not to make this a part of my prayers; and when I remember my friends on these occasions, there is no likelihood that you can be forgotten. Yours, ever.

P. S.—Cambridge.—I add this postscript at my brother's rooms. He desires to be affectionately remembered to you, and if you are in town about a fortnight hence, when he proposes to be there himself, will take a breakfast with you.

LETTER CXLIII.

To the same.

Sept. 4, 1765.

THOUGH I have some very agreeable acquaintance at Huntingdon, my dear cousin, none are so agreeable as the arrival of your letters. I thank you for that which I have just received from Droxford, and particularly for that part of it, where you give me an unlimited liberty upon the subject I have already so often written upon. Whatever interests us deeply, as naturally flows into the pen as it does from the lips, when every restraint is taken away, and we meet with a friend indulgent enough to attend to us. How many, in all that variety of characters with whom I am acquainted, could I find, after the strictest search, to whom I could write as I do to you? I hope the number will increase; I am sure it cannot easily be diminished. Poor ———! I have heard the whole of his history, and can only lament, what I am sure I can make no apology for. Two of my friends have been cut off during my illness, in the midst of such a life as it is frightful to reflect upon; and here am I, in better health and spirits than I can almost remember to have enjoyed before, after having spent months in the apprehension of instant death. How mysterious are the

ways of Providence! Why did I receive grace and mercy? Why was I preserved, afflicted for my good, received, as I trust, into favour, and blessed with the greatest happiness I can ever know or hope for in this life, while these were overtaken by the great arrest, unawakened, unrepenting, and every way unprepared for it? His infinite wisdom, to whose infinite mercy I owe it all, can solve these questions, and none beside him. If a free-thinker, as many a man mis-calls himself, could be brought to give a serious answer to them, he would certainly say—"Without doubt, sir, you was in great danger, you had a narrow escape, a most fortunate one indeed." How excessively foolish, as well as shocking! As if life depended upon luck; and all that we are or can be, all that we have or hope for, could possibly be referred to accident. Yet to this freedom of thought it is owing, that he, who, as our Saviour tells us, is thoroughly apprised of the death of the meanest of his creatures, is supposed to leave those, whom he has made in his own image, to the mercy of chance; and to this therefore it is likewise owing, that the correction which our heavenly Father bestows upon us, that we may be fitted to receive his blessing, is so often disappointed of its benevolent intention, and that men despise the chastening of the Almighty. Fevers and all diseases are accidents; and long life, recovery at least from sickness, is the gift of the physician! No man can be a greater friend to the use of means upon these occasions than myself, for it were presumption and enthusiasm to neglect them. God has endued them with salutary properties, on purpose that we might avail ourselves of them, otherwise that part of his creation were in vain. But to impute our recovery to the medicine, and to carry our views no further, is to rob God of his honour, and is saying in effect, that he has parted with the keys of life and death, and, by giving to a drug the power to heal us, has placed our lives out of his own reach. He that thinks thus, may as well fall upon his knees at once, and return thanks to the medicine that cured him; for it was certainly more immediately instrumental in his recovery, than either the apothecary or the doctor. My dear cousin,—a firm persuasion of the superintendence of Providence, over all our con-

cerns, is absolutely necessary to our happiness. Without it, we cannot be said to believe in the Scripture, or practise any thing like resignation to his will. If I am convinced that no affliction can befall me without the permission of God, I am convinced likewise, that he sees, and knows, that I am afflicted: believing this, I must in the same degree believe, that if I pray to him for deliverance, he hears me; I must needs know, likewise, with equal assurance, that if he hears, he will also deliver me, if that will upon the whole be most conducive to my happiness; and if he does not deliver me, I may be well assured that he has none but the most benevolent intention in declining it. He made us, not because we could add to his happiness, which was always perfect, but that we might be happy ourselves; and will he not in all his dispensations towards us, even in the minutest, consult that end for which he made us? To suppose the contrary, is (which we are not always aware of) affronting every one of his attributes; and at the same time the certain consequence of disbelieving his care for us is, that we renounce utterly our dependence upon him. In this view it will appear plainly, that the line of duty is not stretched too tight, when we are told, that we ought to accept every thing at his hand as a blessing, and to be thankful even while we smart under the rod of iron with which he sometimes rules us. Without this persuasion, every blessing, however we may think ourselves happy in it, loses its greatest recommendation, and every affliction is intolerable. Death itself must be welcome to him who has this faith; and he, who has it not, must aim at it, if he is not a madman. You cannot think how glad I am to hear you are going to commence lady and mistress of Freemantle*. I know it well, and could go to it from Southampton blindfold. You are kind to invite me to it, and I shall be so kind to myself as to accept the invitation; though I should not, for a slight consideration, be prevailed upon to quit my beloved retirement at Huntingdon. Yours ever.

* Freemantle, a villa near Southampton.

LETTER CXLIV.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Sept. 14, 1765.

My dear cousin,

THE longer I live here, the better I like the place, and the people who belong to it. I am upon very good terms with no less than five families, besides two or three odd scrambling fellows like myself. The last acquaintance I made here is with the race of the Unwins, consisting of father and mother, son and daughter, the most comfortable, social folks you ever knew. The son is about twenty-one years of age, one of the most unreserved and amiable young men I ever conversed with. He is not yet arrived at that time of life, when suspicion recommends itself to us in the form of wisdom, and sets every thing, but our own dear selves, at an immeasurable distance from our esteem and confidence. Consequently he is known almost as soon as seen; and having nothing in his heart that makes it necessary for him to keep it barred and bolted, opens it to the perusal even of a stranger. The father is a clergyman, and the son is designed for orders. The design however is quite his own, proceeding merely from his being, and having always been, sincere in his belief and love of the Gospel. Another acquaintance I have lately made, is with a Mr. Nicholson, a North-country divine, very poor, but very good, and very happy. He reads prayers here twice a-day, all the year round, and travels on foot to serve two churches every Sunday through the year, his journey out and home again being sixteen miles. I supped with him last night. He gave me bread and cheese, and a black jug of ale of his own brewing, and doubtless brewed by his own hands. Another of my acquaintance is Mr. —, a thin, tall, old man, and as good as he is thin. He drinks nothing but water, and eats no flesh, partly (I believe) from a religious scruple (for he is very religious), and partly in the spirit of a valetudinarian. He is to be met with every morning of his life, at about six o'clock, at a fountain of very fine water, about a mile from the town, which is reckoned extremely like the Bristol spring. Being both early risers, and the only early walkers in the place, we soon became acquainted. His

great piety can be equalled by nothing, but his great regularity; for he is the most perfect time-piece in the world. I have received a visit likewise from Mr. —. He is very much a gentleman, well-read, and sensible. I am persuaded, in short, that if I had had the choice of all England where to fix my abode, I could not have chosen better for myself, and most likely I should not have chosen so well.

You say, you hope it is not necessary for salvation to undergo the same afflictions that I have undergone. No! my dear cousin, God deals with his children as a merciful father; he does not, as he himself tells us, afflict willingly the sons of men. Doubtless there are many who, having been placed, by his good providence, out of the reach of any great evil, and the influence of bad example, have, from their very infancy, been partakers of the grace of his holy Spirit, in such a manner as never to have allowed themselves in any grievous offence against him. May you love him more and more, day by day; as every day, while you think upon him, you will find him more worthy of your love: and may you be finally accepted by him for his sake, whose intercession for all his faithful servants cannot but prevail! Yours ever.

LETTER CXLV.

To the same.

Huntingdon, Oct. 10, 1765.

My dear cousin,

I SHOULD grumble at your long silence, if I did not know, that one may love one's friends very well, though one is not always in a humour to write to them. Besides, I have the satisfaction of being perfectly sure, that you have at least twenty times recollected the debt you owe me, and as often resolved to pay it: and perhaps, while you remain indebted to me, you think of me twice as often as you would do if the account was clear. These are the reflections with which I comfort myself under the affliction of not hearing from you: my temper does not incline me to jealousy, and if it did, I should set all right by having recourse to what I have already received from you.

I thank God for your friendship, and for every friend I have: for all the pleas-

ing circumstances here, for my health of body, and perfect serenity of mind. To recollect the past, and compare it with the present, is all I have need of to fill me with gratitude; and to be grateful is to be happy. Not that I think myself sufficiently thankful, or that I ever shall be so in this life. The warmest heart perhaps only feels by fits, and is often as insensible as the coldest. This at least is frequently the case with mine, and oftener than it should be. But the mercy that can forgive iniquity, will never be severe to mark our frailties. To that mercy, my dear cousin, I commend you, with earnest wishes for your welfare, and remain your ever affectionate.

LETTER CXLVI.

To Major Cowper.

Huntingdon, Oct. 18, 1765.

My dear major,
I HAVE neither lost the use of my fingers nor my memory, though my unaccountable silence might incline you to suspect that I had lost both. The history of those things which have, from time to time, prevented my scribbling, would not only be insipid, but extremely voluminous, for which reasons they will not make their appearance at present, nor probably at any time hereafter. If my neglecting to write to you were a proof that I had never thought of you, and that had been really the case, five shillings a piece would have been much too little to give for the sight of such a monster! but I am no such monster, nor do I perceive in myself the least tendency to such a transformation. You may recollect that I had but very uncomfortable expectations of the accommodations I should meet with at Huntingdon. How much better is it to take our lot, where it shall please Providence to cast it, without anxiety! Had I chosen for myself, it is impossible I could have fixed upon a place so agreeable to me in all respects. I so much dreaded the thought of having a new acquaintance to make, with no other recommendation than that of being a perfect stranger, that I heartily wished no creature here might take the least notice of me. Instead of which, in about two months after my arrival, I be-

came known to all the visitable people here, and do verily think it the most agreeable neighbourhood I ever saw.

Here are three families who have received me with the utmost civility, and two in particular have treated me with as much cordiality as if their pedigree and mine had grown upon the same sheep-skin. Besides these, there are three or four single men, who suit my temper to a hair. The town is one of the neatest in England; the country is fine for several miles about it, and the roads, which are all turnpike, and strike out four or five different ways, are perfectly good all the year round. I mention this latter circumstance chiefly because my distance from Cambridge has made a horseman of me at last, or at least is likely to do so. My brother and I meet every week, by an alternate reciprocation of intercourse, as Sam Johnson would express it; sometimes I get a lift in a neighbour's chaise, but generally ride. As to my own personal condition, I am much happier than the day is long, and sun-shine and candle-light alike see me perfectly contented. I get books in abundance, as much company as I choose, a deal of *comfortable leisure*, and enjoy better health, I think, than for many years past. What is there wanting to make me happy? Nothing, if I can but be as thankful as I ought: and I trust that He, who has bestowed so many blessings upon me, will give me gratitude to crown them all. I beg you will give my love to my dear cousin Maria, and to every body at the Park. If Mrs. Maitland is with you, as I suspect by a passage in lady Hesketh's letter to me, pray remember me to her very affectionately. And believe me, my dear friend, ever yours.

LETTER CXLVII.

To Mrs. Cowper.

My dear cousin,
I HAVE not been behind-hand in reproaching myself with neglect, but desire to take shame to myself for my unprofitableness in this, as well as in all other respects. I take the next immediate opportunity however of thanking you for yours, and of assuring you, that instead of being surprised at your silence,

I rather wonder that you, or any of my friends, have any room left for so careless and negligent a correspondent in your memories. I am obliged to you for the intelligence you send me of my kindred, and rejoice to hear of their welfare. He, who settles the bounds of our habitations, has at length cast our lot at a great distance from each other; but I do not therefore forget their former kindness to me, or cease to be interested in their well-being. You live in the centre of a world I know you do not delight in. Happy are you, my dear friend, in being able to discern the insufficiency of all it can afford, to fill and satisfy the desires of an immortal soul. That God, who created us for the enjoyment of himself, has determined in mercy that it shall fail us here; in order that the blessed result of all our inquiries after happiness in the creature, may be a warm pursuit, and a close attachment to our true interests, in fellowship and communion with Him, through the name and mediation of a dear Redeemer. I bless his goodness and grace, that I have any reason to hope I am a partaker with you in the desire after better things than are to be found in a world polluted with sin, and therefore devoted to destruction. May He enable us both to consider our present life in its only true light, as an opportunity put into our hands to glorify him amongst men; by a conduct suited to his word and will. I am miserably defective in this holy and blessed art; but I hope there is at the bottom of all my sinful infirmities, a sincere desire to live just so long as I may be enabled, in some poor measure, to answer the end of my existence in this respect, and then to obey the summons, and attend him in a world, where they, who are his servants here, shall pay him an un sinful obedience for ever. Your dear mother is too good to me, and puts a more charitable construction upon my silence than the fact will warrant. I am not better employed than I should be in corresponding with her. I have that within, which hinders me wretchedly, in every thing that I ought to do, but is prone to trifle, and let time and every good thing run to waste. I hope however to write to her soon.

My love and best wishes attend Mr. Cowper, and all that inquire after me. May God be with you, to bless you, and

do you good, by all his dispensations! Don't forget me when you are speaking to our best friend before his mercy-seat. Yours ever.

N. B. I am not married.

LETTER CXLVIII.

To the same.

Olney, Aug. 31, 1769.

My dear cousin,

A LETTER from your brother Frederic brought me yesterday the most afflictive intelligence that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke, with that resignation to his will which none but Himself can give, and which he gives to none but his own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with a throne of grace! You have resources in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer, which are withheld from millions: and the promises of God, which are Yea and Amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which your heavenly Father will ever put into your hand. May He now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace, in the midst of trouble. He has said, When thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee; and when through the floods, they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and he knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time, when he will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust in him. I bear you and yours upon my heart before him, night and day; for I never expect to hear of distress, which shall call upon me with a louder voice to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am, and believe, and am sure, that he will hear me for you also. He is the friend of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, even God in his holy habitation; in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely he will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you

great and everlasting good by it, make the world appear like dust and vanity in your sight, as it truly is; and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor pain; but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. Oh that comfortable word! "I have chosen thee in the furnaces of affliction;" so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and he chastens us because we are his children.

My dear cousin,—I commit you to the word of his grace, and to the comforts of his holy Spirit. Your life is needful for your family; may God, in mercy to them, prolong it; and may he preserve you from the dangerous effects which a stroke like this might have upon a frame so tender as yours. I grieve with you, I pray for you: could I do more, I would; but God must comfort you. Yours, in our dear Lord Jesus.

LETTER CXLIX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 21, 1779.

AMICO mio, be pleased to buy me a glazier's diamond pencil. I have glazed the two frames designed to receive my pine-plants. But I cannot mend the kitchen windows, till by the help of that implement I can reduce the glass to its proper dimensions. If I were a plumber, I should be a complete glazier; and possibly the happy time may come, when I shall be seen trudging away to the neighbouring towns with a shelf of glass hanging at my back. If government should impose another tax upon that commodity, I hardly know a business in which a gentleman might more successfully employ himself. A Chinese, of ten times my fortune, would avail himself of such an opportunity without scruple; and why should not I, who want money as much as any mandarin in China! Rousseau would have been charmed to have seen me so occupied, and would have exclaimed, with rapture, "that he had found the Emilius, who (he supposed) had subsisted only in his own idea." I would recommend it to you to follow my example. You will presently qualify yourself for the task; and

may not only amuse yourself at home, but may even exercise your skill in mending the church windows; which, as it would save money to the parish, would conduce, together with your other ministerial accomplishments, to make you extremely popular in the place.

I have eight pair of tame pigeons. When I first enter the garden in the morning, I find them perched upon the wall, waiting for their breakfast, for I feed them always upon the gravel walk. If your wish should be accomplished, and you should find yourself furnished with the wings of a dove, I shall undoubtedly find you amongst them; only be so good, if that should be the case, to announce yourself by some means or other, for I imagine your crop will require something better than tares to fill it.

Your mother and I, last week, made a trip in a post-chaise to Gayhurst, the seat of Mr. Wright, about four miles off. He understood that I did not much affect strange faces, and sent over his servant on purpose to inform me, that he was going into Leicestershire, and that, if I chose to see the gardens, I might gratify myself, without danger of seeing the proprietor. I accepted the invitation, and was delighted with all I found there. The situation is happy, the gardens elegantly disposed, the hot-house in the most flourishing state, and the orange-trees the most captivating creatures of the kind I ever saw. A man, in short, had need have the talents of Cox or Langford, the auctioneers, to do the whole scene justice. Our love attends you all. Yours.

LETTER CL.

To the same.

Oct. 31, 1779.

My dear friend,
I wrote my last letter merely to inform you, that I had nothing to say, in answer to which you have said nothing. I admire the propriety of your conduct, though I am a loser by it. I will endeavour to say something now, and shall hope for something in return.

I have been well entertained with Johnson's biography, for which I thank you:

with one exception, and that a swinging one, I think he has acquitted himself with his usual good sense and sufficiency. His treatment of Milton is unmerciful to the last degree. He has belaboured that great poet's character with the most industrious cruelty. As a man, he has hardly left him the shadow of one good quality. Churlishness in his private life, and a rancorous hatred of every thing royal in his public, are the two colours with which he has smeared all the canvass. If he had any virtues, they are not to be found in the Doctor's picture of him : and it is well for Milton, that some sourness in his temper is the only vice with which his memory has been charged ; it is evident enough, that if his biographer could have discovered more, he would not have spared him. As a poet, he has treated him with severity enough, and has plucked one or two of the most beautiful feathers out of his muse's wing, and trampled them under his great foot. He has passed sentence of condemnation upon Lycidas, and has taken occasion, from that charming poem, to expose to ridicule (what is indeed ridiculous enough) the childish prattlement of pastoral compositions, as if Lycidas was the prototype and pattern of them all. The liveliness of the description, the sweetness of the numbers, the classical spirit of antiquity, that prevails in it, go for nothing. I am convinced, by the way, that he has no ear for poetical numbers, or that it was stopped, by prejudice, against the harmony of Milton's. Was there ever any thing so delightful as the music of the *Paradise Lost*? It is like that of a fine organ ; has the fullest and the deepest tones of majesty, with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute. Variety without end, and never equalled, unless perhaps by Virgil. Yet the Doctor has little, or nothing, to say upon this copious theme ; but talks something about the unfitness of the English language for blank verse, and how apt it is, in the mouth of some readers, to degenerate into declamation.

I could talk a good while longer, but I have no room ; our love attends you. Yours affectionately.

LETTER CLI.

To the same.

Dec. 2, 1779.

My dear friend, how quick is the succession of human events ! The cares of to-day are seldom the cares of to-morrow ; and when we lie down at night, we may safely say, to most of our troubles—"Ye have done your worst, and we shall meet no more."

This observation was suggested to me by reading your last letter, which, though I have written since I received it, I have never answered. When that epistle passed under your pen, you were miserable about your tithes, and your imagination was hung round with pictures, that terrified you to such a degree, as made even the receipt of money burthensome. But it is all over now. You sent away your farmers in good-humour (for you can make people merry whenever you please), and now you have nothing to do, but to chink your purse, and laugh at what is past. Your delicacy makes you groan under that which other men never feel, or feel but lightly. A fly, that settles upon the tip of the nose, is troublesome ; and this is a comparison adequate to the most that mankind in general are sensible of, upon such tiny occasions. But the flies that pester you, always get between your eye-lids, where the annoyance is almost insupportable.

I would follow your advice, and endeavour to furnish lord North with a scheme of supplies for the ensuing year, if the difficulty I find in answering the call of my own emergencies did not make me despair of satisfying those of the nation. I can say but this : If I had ten acres of land in the world, whereas I have not one, and in those ten acres should discover a gold-mine, richer than all Mexico and Peru, when I had reserved a few ounces for my own annual supply, I would willingly give the rest to government. My ambition would be more gratified by annihilating the national incumbrances, than by going daily down to the bottom of a mine, to wallow in my own emolument. This is patriotism—you will allow ; but, alas, this virtue is for the most part in the hands of those who can do no good with it ! He that has but a single handful of it, catches so greedily at the first opportunity of grow-

ing rich, that his patriotism drops to the ground, and he grasps the gold instead of it. He that never meets with such an opportunity, holds it fast in his clenched fists, and says—"Oh, how much good I would do, if I could!"

Your mother says—"Pray send my dear love." There is hardly room to add mine, but you will suppose it. Yours.

LETTER CLII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

May 3, 1780.

Dear sir,

You indulge in such a variety of subjects, and allow me such a latitude of excursion in this scribbling employment, that I have no excuse for silence. I am much obliged to you for swallowing such boluses as I send you, for the sake of my gilding, and verily believe, I am the only man alive from whom they would be welcome to a palate like yours. I wish I could make them more splendid than they are, more alluring to the eye, at least, if not more pleasing to the taste; but my leaf-gold is tarnished, and has received such a tinge from the vapours that are ever brooding over my mind, that I think it no small proof of your partiality to me, that you will read my letters. I am not fond of long-winded metaphors; I have always observed, that they halt at the latter end of their progress, and so does mine. I deal much in ink indeed, but not such ink as is employed by poets, and writers of essays. Mine is a harmless fluid, and guilty of no deceptions, but such as may prevail, without the least injury to the person imposed on. I draw mountains, valleys, woods, and streams, and ducks, and dabchicks. I admire them myself, and Mrs. Unwin admires them; and her praise, and my praise, put together, are fame enough for me. Oh! I could spend whole days, and moon-light nights, in feeding upon a lovely prospect: My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour, as I have done for many years, there might, perhaps, be many miserable men among them, but not an unawakened one would be found, from the Arctic to the Antarctic

circle. At present, the difference between them and me is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so; for rested in, and viewed without a reference to their Author, what is the earth, what are the planets, what is the sun itself, but a bauble? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, "The maker of all these wonders is my friend!" Their eyes have never been opened, to see that they are trifles; mine have been, and will be till they are closed for ever. They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hot-house, rich as a West-Indian garden, things of consequence; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with ten times more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains will ever be worth a farthing; amuse myself with a green-house which lord Bute's gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with; and when I have paid it the accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself—"This is not mine; 'tis a play-thing lent me for the present; I must leave it soon."

LETTER CLIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

May 8, 1780.

My dear friend,

My scribbling humour has of late been entirely absorbed in the passion for landscape drawing. It is a most amusing art, and, like every other art, requires much practice and attention.

Nil sine magno

Vita labore dedit mortalibus.

Excellence is providentially placed beyond the reach of indolence, that success may be the reward of industry, and that idleness may be punished with obscurity and disgrace. So long as I am pleased with an employment, I am capable of unwearied application, because my feelings are all of the intense kind: I never received a *little* pleasure from any thing in my life; if I am delighted, it is in the extreme. The unhappy consequence of this temperature is, that my attach-

ment to any situation seldom outlives the novelty of it. That nerve of my imagination, that feels the touch of any particular amusement, twangs under the energy of the pressure with so much vehemence, that it soon becomes sensible of weariness and fatigue. Hence I draw an unfavourable prognostic, and expect that I shall shortly be constrained to look out for something else. Then perhaps I may string the harp again, and be able to comply with your demand.

Now for the visit you propose to pay us, and propose *not* to pay us: the hope of which plays upon your paper, like a jack-o-lantern upon the ceiling. This is no mean simile, for Virgil (you remember) uses it. 'Tis here, 'tis there, it vanishes, it returns, it dazzles you, a cloud interposes, and it is gone. However just the comparison, I hope you will contrive to spoil it, and that your final determination will be to come. As to the masons you expect, bring them with you—bring brick, bring mortar, bring every thing, that would oppose itself to your journey—all shall be welcome. I have a green-house that is too small, come and enlarge it; build me a pinery; repair the garden wall, that has great need of your assistance; do any thing, you cannot do too much. So far from thinking you and your train troublesome, we shall rejoice to see you, upon these, or upon any other terms you can propose. But, to be serious, you will do well to consider, that a long summer is before you, that the party will not have such another opportunity to meet this great while; that you may finish your masonry long enough before winter, though you should not begin this month; but that you cannot always find your brother and sister Powley at Olney. These, and some other considerations, such as the desire we have to see you, and the pleasure we expect from seeing you altogether, may, and, I think, ought to overcome your scruples.

From a general recollection of Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, I thought, (and, I remember, I told you so,) that there was a striking resemblance between that period, and the present. But I am now reading, and have read, three volumes of Hume's History, one of which is engrossed entirely by that subject. There, I see reason to alter my opinion, and the seeming resemblance

has disappeared, upon a more particular information. Charles succeeded to a long train of arbitrary princes, whose subjects had tamely acquiesced in the despotism of their masters, till their privileges were all forgot. He did but tread in their steps, and exemplify the principles in which he had been brought up, when he oppressed his people. But just at that time, unhappily for the monarch, the subject began to see, and to see that he had a right to property and freedom. This marks a sufficient difference between the disputes of that day and the present. But there was another main cause of that rebellion, which, at this time, does not operate at all. The king was devoted to the hierarchy; his subjects were puritans, and would not bear it. Every circumstance of ecclesiastical order and discipline was an abomination to them, and, in his esteem, an indispensable duty; and, though at last he was obliged to give up many things, he would not abolish episcopacy; and, till that were done, his concessions could have no conciliating effect. These two concurring causes were indeed sufficient to set three kingdoms in a flame. But they subsist not now, nor any other, I hope, notwithstanding the bustle made by the patriots, equal to the production of such terrible events. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLIV.

To Mrs. Cowper.

May 10, 1780.

My dear cousin,
I do not write to comfort you: that office is not likely to be well performed by one who has no comfort for himself; nor to comply with an impertinent ceremony, which in general might well be spared upon such occasions: but because I would not seem indifferent to the concerns of those I have so much reason to esteem and love. If I did not sorrow for your brother's death, I should expect that nobody would for mine; when I knew him, he was much beloved, and, I doubt not, continued to be so. To live and die together is the lot of a few happy families, who hardly know what a separation means, and one sepulchre serves them all; but the ashes of our kindred are dispersed indeed.

Whether the American gulph has swallowed up any other of my relations, I know not; it has made many mourners.

Believe me, my dear cousin, though after a long silence, which perhaps nothing less than the present concern could have prevailed with me to interrupt, as much as ever, your affectionate kinsman.

LETTER CLV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

July 27, 1780.

My dear friend,

As two men sit silent, after having exhausted all their topics of conversation; one says, "It is very fine weather;" and the other says, "Yes;" one blows his nose, and the other rubs his eye-brows (by the way, this is very much in Homer's manner); such seems to be the case between you and me. After a silence of some days; I wrote you a long something, that (I suppose) was nothing to the purpose, because it has not afforded you materials for an answer. Nevertheless, as it often happens in the case above stated, one of the distressed parties, being deeply sensible of the awkwardness of a dumb duet, breaks silence again, and resolves to speak, though he has nothing to say; so it fares with me. I am with you again in the form of an epistle, though, considering my present emptiness, I have reason to fear that your only joy upon the occasion will be, that it is conveyed to you in a frank.

When I began, I expected no interruption. But if I had expected interruptions without end, I should have been less disappointed. First came the barber; who, after having embellished the outside of my head, has left the inside just as unfurnished as he found it. Then came Olney bridge, not into the house, but into the conversation. The cause relating to it was tried on Tuesday at Buckingham. The judge directed the jury to find a verdict favourable to Olney. The jury consisted of one knave, and eleven fools. The last mentioned followed the afore mentioned, as sheep follow a bell-wether, and decided in direct opposition to the said judge. Then a flaw was discovered in the indictment.

The indictment was quashed, and an order made for a new trial. The new trial will be in the King's Bench, where said knave and said fools will have nothing to do with it. So the men of Olney fling up their caps, and assure themselves of a complete victory. A victory will save me and your mother many shillings, perhaps some pounds, which, except that it has afforded me a subject to write upon, was the only reason why I said so much about it. I know you take an interest in all that concerns us, and will consequently rejoice with us, in the prospect of an event in which we are concerned so nearly. Your's affectionately.

LETTER CLVI.

To the same.

Aug. 6, 1780.

My dear friend,

You like to hear from me. This is a very good reason why I should write; but I have nothing to say. This seems equally a good reason why I should not; yet if you had alighted from your horse at our door this morning, and at this present writing, being five o'clock in the afternoon, had found occasion to say to me; "Mr. Cowper, you have not spoke since I came in, have you resolved never to speak again?" It would be but a poor reply, if, in answer to the summons, I should plead inability as my best and only excuse. And this, by the way, suggests to me a seasonable piece of instruction, and reminds me of what I am very apt to forget, when I have any epistolary business in hand; that a letter may be written upon any thing or nothing, just as that any thing or nothing happens to occur. A man that has a journey before him twenty miles in length, which he is to perform on foot, will not hesitate, and doubt, whether he shall set out or not, because he does not readily conceive how he shall ever reach the end of it; for he knows, that by the simple operation of moving one foot forward first; and then the other, he shall be sure to accomplish it. So it is in the present case, and so it is in every similar case. A letter is written as a conversation is maintained, or a journey performed, not by preconcerted or premeditated means, a new con-

trivance, or an invention never heard of before ; but merely by maintaining a progress, and resolving, as a postillion does, having once set out, never to stop, till we reach the appointed end. If a man may talk without thinking, why may he not write upon the same terms ? A grave gentleman of the last century, a tie-wig, square-toe, Steinkirk figure, would say ; " My good sir, a man has no right to do either." But it is to be hoped, that the present century has nothing to do with the mouldy opinions of the last ; and so good Sir Launcelot, or Sir Paul, or whatever be your name, step into your picture-frame again, and look as if you thought for another century, and leave us moderns in the mean time to think when we can, and to write whether we can or not, else we might as well be dead as you are.

When we look back upon our forefathers, we seem to look back upon the people of another nation, almost upon creatures of another species. Their vast rambling mansions, spacious halls, and painted casements, the gothic porch, smothered with honeysuckles, their little gardens, and high walls, their box-edgings, balls of holly, and yew-tree statues, are become so entirely unfashionable now, that we can hardly believe it possible, that a people, who resembled us so little in their taste, should resemble us in any thing else. But in every thing else, I suppose, they were our counterparts exactly ; and time, that has sewed up the slashed sleeve, and reduced the large trunk hose to a neat pair of silk stockings, has left human nature just where it found it. The inside of the man at least has undergone no change. His passions, appetites, and aims, are just what they ever were. They wear perhaps a handsomer disguise than they did in days of yore ; for philosophy and literature will have their effect upon the exterior ; but, in every other respect, a modern is only an ancient in a different dress. Yours.

LETTER CLVII.

To Mrs. Cowper.

Aug. 31, 1780.

My dear cousin,
I am obliged to you for your long letter, which did not seem so, and for your

short one, which was more than I had any reason to expect. Short as it was, it conveyed to me two interesting articles of intelligence ; an account of your recovering from a fever, and of lady Cowper's death. The latter was, I suppose, to be expected ; for by what remembrance I have of her ladyship, who was never much acquainted with her, she had reached those years, that are always found upon the borders of another world. As for you, your time of life is comparatively of a youthful date. You may think of death as much as you please (you cannot think of it too much), but I hope you will live to think of it many years.

It costs me not much difficulty to suppose, that my friends, who were already grown old when I saw them last, are old still ; but it costs me a good deal sometimes to think of those, who were at that time young, as being older than they were. Not having been an eye-witness of the change that time has made in them, and my former idea of them not being corrected by observation, it remains the same ; my memory presents me with this image unimpaired, and, while it retains the resemblance of what they were, forgets that, by this time, the picture may have lost much of its likeness, through the alteration that succeeding years have made in the original. I know not what impressions Time may have made upon your person, for while his claws (as our grannams called them) strike deep furrows in some faces, he seems to sheath them with much tenderness, as if fearful of doing injury, to others. But though an enemy to the person, he is a friend to the mind, and you have found him so. Though, even in this respect, his treatment of us depends upon what he meets with at our hands ; if we use him well, and listen to his admonitions, he is a friend indeed ; but otherwise the worst of enemies, who takes from us daily something that we valued, and gives us nothing better in its stead. It is well with them who, like you, can stand a tip-toe on the mountain-top of human life, look down with pleasure upon the valley they have passed, and sometimes stretch their wings in joyful hope of a happy flight into eternity. Yet a little while, and your hope will be accomplished.

When you can favour me with a little

account of your own family, without inconvenience, I shall be glad to receive it; for though separated from my kindred by little more than half a century of miles, I know as little of their concerns as if oceans and continents were interposed between us. Yours, my dear cousin.

LETTER CLVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 3, 1780.

My dear friend,
I AM glad you are so provident, and that while you are young you have furnished yourself with the means of comfort in old age. Your crutch and your pipe may be of use to you (and may they be so), should your years be extended to an antediluvian date; and for your perfect accommodation, you seem to want nothing but a clerk called Snuffle, and a sexton of the name of Skeleton, to make your ministerial equipage complete.

I think I have read as much of the first volume of the *Biographia* as I shall ever read. I find it very amusing; more so perhaps than it would have been had they sifted their characters with more exactness, and admitted none but those who had in some way or other entitled themselves to immortality, by deserving well of the public. Such a compilation would perhaps have been more judicious, though I confess it would have afforded less variety. The priests and monks of earlier, and the doctors of later days, who have signalized themselves by nothing but a controversial pamphlet, long since thrown by, and never to be perused again, might have been forgotten, without injury, or loss to the national character for learning or genius. This observation suggested to me the following lines, which may serve to illustrate my meaning, and at the same time to give my criticism a sprightlier air.

Oh fond attempt to give a deathless lot
To names ignoble, born to be forgot;
In vain, recorded in historic page,
They court the notice of a future age;
Those twinkling, tiny, lustres of the land,
Drop one by one, from Fame's neglecting hand;
Lethæan gulfs receive them as they fall,
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.
So when a child (as playful children use)
Has burnt to cinder a stale last year's news,

The flame extinct, he views the roving fire,
There goes my lady, and there goes the 'squire,
There goes the parson—Oh illustrious spark!
And there—scarce less illustrious—goes the clerk.

Virgil admits none but worthies into the Elysian fields; I cannot recollect the lines in which he describes them all, but these in particular I well remember:

*Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo,
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.*

A chaste and scrupulous conduct, like his, would well become the writer of national biography. But enough of this.

Our respects attend Miss Shuttleworth, with many thanks for her intended present. Some purses derive all their value from their contents, but these will have an intrinsic value of their own; and though mine should be often empty, which is not an improbable supposition, I shall still esteem it highly on its own account.

If you could meet with a second-hand Virgil, ditto Homer, both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, together with a *Clavis*, for I have no *Lexicon*, and all tolerably cheap, I shall be obliged to you if you will make the purchase. Yours.

LETTER CLIX.

To the same.

Sept. 7, 1780.

My dear friend,
As many gentlemen as there are in the world, who have children, and heads capable of reflecting upon the important subject of their education, so many opinions there are about it; and many of them just and sensible, though almost all differing from each other. With respect to the education of boys, I think they are generally made to draw in Latin and Greek trammels too soon. It is pleasing, no doubt, to a parent, to see his child already in some sort a proficient in those languages, at an age when most others are entirely ignorant of them; but hence it often happens, that a boy, who could construe a fable of *Æsop* at six or seven years of age, having exhausted his little stock of attention and diligence, in making that notable acquisition, grows weary of his task, conceives a dislike for study, and perhaps makes but a very indifferent

progress afterwards. The mind and body have, in this respect, a striking resemblance of each other. In childhood they are both nimble, but not strong; they can skip and frisk about with wonderful agility, but hard labour spoils them both. In maturer years they become less active, but more vigorous, more capable of a fixt application, and can make themselves sport with that, which a little earlier would have affected them with intolerable fatigue. I should recommend it to you, therefore (but after all you must judge for yourself), to allot the two next years of little John's scholarship to writing and arithmetic, together with which, for variety's sake, and because it is capable of being formed into an amusement, I would mingle geography, a science (which, if not attended to betimes, is seldom made an object of much consideration) essentially necessary to the accomplishment of a gentleman; yet, as I know (by sad experience), imperfectly, if at all, inculcated in the schools. Lord Spencer's son, when he was four years of age, knew the situation of every kingdom, country, city, river, and remarkable mountain in the world. For this attainment, which I suppose his father had never made, he was indebted to a plaything; having been accustomed to amuse himself with those maps, which are cut into several compartments, so as to be thrown into a heap of confusion, that they may be put together again with an exact coincidence of all their angles and bearings, so as to form a perfect whole.

If he begins Latin and Greek at eight, or even at nine years of age, it is surely soon enough. Seven years, the usual allowance for these acquisitions, are more than sufficient for the purpose, especially with his readiness in learning; for you would hardly wish to have him qualified for the university before fifteen, a period, in my mind, much too early for it, and when he could hardly be trusted there without the utmost danger to his morals. Upon the whole, you will perceive, that, in my judgment, the difficulty, as well as the wisdom, consists more in bridling in and keeping back a boy of his parts, than in pushing him forward. If, therefore, at the end of the two next years, instead of putting a grammar into his hand, you should allow him to amuse himself with some agreeable writers upon

the subject of natural philosophy for another year, I think it would answer well. There is a book called *Cosmotheoria Puerilis*, there are Durham's *Physico* and *Astro-theology*, together with several others in the same manner, very intelligible even to a child, and full of useful instruction.

LETTER CLX.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Feb. 15, 1781.

My dear friend,

I AM glad you were pleased with my report of so extraordinary a case. If the thought of versifying the decisions of our courts of justice had struck me while I had the honour to attend them, it would perhaps have been no difficult matter to have compiled a volume of such amusing and interesting precedents; which, if they wanted the eloquence of the Greek or Roman oratory, would have amply compensated that deficiency by the harmony of rhyme and metre.

Your account of my uncle and your mother gave me great pleasure. I have long been afraid to inquire after some, in whose welfare I always feel myself interested, lest the question should produce a painful answer. Longevity is the lot of so few, and is so seldom rendered comfortable by the associations of good health and good spirits, that I could not very reasonably suppose, either your relations or mine so happy in those respects, as it seems they are. May they continue to enjoy those blessings so long as the date of life shall last! I do not think that in these coster-monger days, as I have a notion Falstaff calls them, an antediluvian age is at all a desirable thing; but to live comfortably, while we do live, is a great matter, and comprehends in it every thing that can be wished for on this side the curtain that hangs between time and eternity.

Farewell, my better friend than any I have to boast of either among the Lords, or gentlemen of the House of Commons.

LETTER CLXI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

June 24, 1781.

My dear friend,

THE letter you withheld so long, lest it should give me pain, gave me pleasure. Horace says, The poets are a waspish race; and from my own experience of the temper of two or three, with whom I was formerly connected, I can readily subscribe to the character he gives them. But, for my own part, I have never yet felt that excessive irritability, which some writers discover, when a friend, in the words of Pope,

“Just hints à fault, or hesitates dislike.”

Least of all I would give way to such an unseasonable ebullition, merely because a civil question is proposed to me, with such gentleness, and by a man whose concern for my credit and character I verily believe to be sincere. I reply therefore, not peevishly, but with a sense of the kindness of your intentions, that I hope you may make yourself very easy on a subject that I can perceive has occasioned you some solicitude. When I wrote the poem called Truth, it was indispensably necessary that I should set forth that doctrine which I know to be true, and that I should pass what I understood to be a just censure upon opinions and persuasions, that differ from, or stand in direct opposition to it; because, though some errors may be innocent, and even religious errors are not always pernicious, yet, in a case where the faith and hope of a Christian are concerned, they must necessarily be destructive; and because, neglecting this, I should have betrayed this subject; either suppressing what, in my judgment, is of the last importance, or giving countenance, by a timid silence, to the very evils it was my design to combat. That you may understand me better, I will subjoin, that I wrote that poem on purpose to inculcate the eleemosynary character of the Gospel, as a dispensation of mercy, in the most absolute sense of the word, to the exclusion of all claims of merit on the part of the receiver; consequently to set the brand of invalidity upon the plea of works, and to discover, upon scriptural ground, the absurdity of that notion, which includes a

solecism in the very terms of it, that man, by repentance and good works, may deserve the mercy of his Maker. I call it a solecism, because mercy deserved ceases to be mercy, and must take the name of justice. This is the opinion, which I said in my last the world would not acquiesce in; but, except this, I do not recollect that I have introduced a syllable into any of my pieces that they can possibly object to; and even this I have endeavoured to deliver from doctrinal dryness, by as many pretty things, in the way of trinket and plaything, as I could muster upon the subject. So that, if I have rubbed their gums, I have taken care to do it with a coral, and even that coral embellished by the ribbon to which it is tied, and recommended by the tinkling of all the bells I could contrive to annex to it.

You need not trouble yourself to call on Johnson; being perfectly acquainted with the progress of the business, I am able to satisfy your curiosity myself. The post before the last, I returned to him the second sheet of Table-Talk, which he had sent me for correction, and which stands foremost in the volume. The delay has enabled me to add a piece of considerable length; which, but for the delay, would not have made its appearance upon this occasion: it answers to the name of Hope.

I remember a line in the *Odyssey*, which, literally translated, imports, that there is nothing in the world more impudent than the belly. But had Homer met with an instance of modesty like yours, he would either have suppressed that observation, or at least have qualified it with an exception. I hope that, for the future, Mrs. Unwin will never suffer you to go to London without putting some victuals in your pocket; for what a strange article would it make in a newspaper, that a tall, well-dressed gentleman, by his appearance a clergyman, and with a purse of gold in his pocket, was found starved to death in the street. How would it puzzle conjecture to account for such a phenomenon! Some would suppose that you had been kidnapt, like Betty Canning, of hungry memory: others would say, The gentleman was a Methodist, and had practised a rigorous self-denial, which had unhappily proved too hard for his constitution: but I will venture to say, that nobody would di-

vine the real cause, or suspect for a moment, that your modesty had occasioned the tragedy in question. By the way, is it not possible, that the spareness and slenderness of your person may be owing to the same cause? for surely it is reasonable to suspect, that the bashfulness, which could prevail against you, on so trying an occasion, may be equally prevalent on others. I remember having been told by Colman, that when he once dined with Garrick, he repeatedly pressed him to eat more of a certain dish that he was known to be particularly fond of; Colman as often refused; and at last declared he could not; "But could not you," says Garrick, "if you was in a dark closet by yourself?" The same question might perhaps be put to you, with as much or more propriety; and therefore I recommend it to you, either to furnish yourself with a little more assurance, or always to eat in the dark.

We sympathize with Mrs. Unwin, and, if it will be any comfort to her to know it, can assure her, that a lady in our neighbourhood is always, on such occasions, the most miserable of all things, and yet escapes with great facility, through all the dangers of her state. Yours, *ut semper*.

LETTER CLXII.

To the same.

Oct. 6, 1781.

My dear friend,

WHAT a world are you daily conversant with, which I have not seen these twenty years, and shall never see again! The arts of dissipation (I suppose) are nowhere practised with more refinement or success, than at the place of your present residence. By your account of it, it seems to be just what it was when I visited it,—a scene of idleness and luxury, music, dancing, cards, walking, riding, bathing, eating, drinking, coffee, tea, scandal, dressing, yawning, sleeping; the rooms perhaps more magnificent, because the proprietors are grown richer, but the manners and occupations of the company just the same. Though my life has long been like that of a recluse, I have not the temper of one; nor am I in the least an enemy to cheerfulness and good humour; but I

cannot envy you your situation: I even feel myself constrained to prefer the silence of this nook, and the snug fire-side in our own diminutive parlour, to all the splendour and gaiety of Brighton.

You ask me how I feel on the occasion of my approaching publication? Perfectly at my ease. If I had not been pretty well assured before-hand, that my tranquillity would be but little endangered by such a measure, I would never have engaged in it; for I cannot bear disturbance. I have had in view two principal objects; first, to amuse myself; and secondly, to compass that point in such a manner, that others might possibly be the better for my amusement. If I have succeeded, it will give me pleasure; but if I have failed, I shall not be mortified to the degree that might perhaps be expected. I remember an old adage (though not where it is to be found), "*bene vixit, quæ bene latuit*;" and if I had recollected it at the right time, it should have been the motto to my book. By the way, it will make an excellent one for Retirement, if you can but tell me whom to quote for it. The critics cannot deprive me of the pleasure I have in reflecting, that so far as my leisure has been employed in writing for the public, it has been conscientiously employed, and with a view to their advantage. There is nothing agreeable, to be sure, in being chronicled for a dunce; but, I believe, there lives not a man upon earth who would be less affected by it than myself. With all this indifference to fame, which you know me too well to suppose me capable of affecting, I have taken the utmost pains to deserve it. This may appear a mystery, or a paradox in practice; but it is true. I considered that the taste of the day is refined, and delicate to excess; and that to disgust that delicacy of taste, by a slovenly inattention to it, would be to forfeit, at once, all hope of being useful; and for this reason, though I have written more verse this last year than perhaps any man in England, I have finished, and polished, and touched and retouched, with the utmost care. If, after all, I should be converted into waste paper, it may be my misfortune, but it shall not be my fault. I shall bear it with the most perfect serenity.

I do not mean to give — a copy: he is a good-natured little man, and

crows exactly like a cock ; but knows no more of verse, than the cock he imitates.

Whoever supposes that lady Austen's fortune is precarious is mistaken. I can assure you, upon the ground of the most circumstantial and authentic information, that it is both genteel and perfectly safe. Yours.

LETTER CLXIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Nov. 26, 1781.

My dear friend,

I WROTE to you by the last post, supposing you at Stock ; but, lest that letter should not follow you to Laytonston, and you should suspect me of unreasonable delay ; and lest the frank you have sent me should degenerate into waste paper, and perish upon my hands, I write again. The former letter, however, containing all my present stock of intelligence, it is more than possible that this may prove a blank, or but little worthy your acceptance. You will do me the justice to suppose, that if I could be very entertaining, I would be so ; because, by giving me credit for such a willingness to please, you only allow me a share of that universal vanity which inclines every man, upon all occasions, to exhibit himself to the best advantage. To say the truth, however, when I write, as I do to you, not about business, nor on any subject that approaches to that description, I mean much less my correspondent's amusement, which my modesty will not always permit me to hope for, than my own. There is a pleasure annexed to the communication of one's ideas, whether by word of mouth, or by letter, which nothing earthly can supply the place of ; and it is the delight we find in this mutual intercourse, that not only proves us to be creatures intended for social life, but more than any thing else, perhaps, fits us for it. I have no patience with philosophers ; they, one and all, suppose (at least I understand it to be a prevailing opinion among them) that man's weakness, his necessities, his inability to stand alone, have furnished the prevailing motive, under the influence of which he renounced at first a life of solitude, and became a gregarious crea-

ture. It seems to me more reasonable, as well as more honourable to my species, to suppose, that generosity of soul, and a brotherly attachment to our own kind, drew us, as it were, to one common centre ; taught us to build cities, and inhabit them, and welcome every stranger that would cast in his lot amongst us, that we might enjoy fellowship with each other, and the luxury of reciprocal endearments, without which a paradise could afford no comfort. There are, indeed, all sorts of characters in the world ; there are some whose understandings are so sluggish, and whose hearts are such mere clods, that they live in society without either contributing to the sweets of it, or having any relish for them. A man of this stamp passes by our window continually. I never saw him conversing with a neighbour but once in my life, though I have known him by sight these twelve years. He is of a very sturdy make, and has a round belly, extremely protuberant ; which he evidently considers as his best friend, because it is his only companion, and it is the labour of his life to fill it. I can easily conceive, that it is merely the love of good eating and drinking, and now and then the want of a new pair of shoes, that attaches this man so much to the neighbourhood of his fellow-mortals ; for suppose these exigencies, and others of a like kind, to subsist no longer, and what is there that could give society the preference in his esteem ? He might strut about with his two thumbs upon his hips in the wilderness, he could hardly be more silent than he is at Olney ; and for any advantage or comfort of friendship, or brotherly affection, he could not be more destitute of such blessings there than in his present situation. But other men have something more than guts to satisfy ; there are the yearnings of the heart, which, let philosophers say what they will, are more importunate than all the necessities of the body, that will not suffer a creature, worthy to be called human, to be content with an insulated life, or to look for his friends among the beasts of the forest. Yourself for instance ! It is not because there are no tailors, or pastry-cooks, to be found upon Salisbury plain, that you do not choose it for your abode, but because you are a philanthropist ; because you are susceptible of social impressions, and have a pleasure in

doing a kindness when you can. Now, upon the word of a poor creature, I have said all that I have said, without the least intention to say one word of it when I began. But thus it is with my thoughts—when you shake a crab-tree, the fruit falls; good for nothing indeed when you have got it, but still the best that is to be expected from a crab-tree. You are welcome to them, such as they are; and if you approve my sentiments, tell the philosophers of the day, that I have out-shot them all, and have discovered the true origin of society, when I least looked for it.

LETTER CLXIV.

To the same.

March 7, 1782.

My dear friend,

WE have great pleasure in the contemplation of your Northern journey, as it promises us a sight of you and yours by the way, and are only sorry miss Shuttleworth cannot be of the party. A line to ascertain the hour when we may expect you, by the next preceding post, will be welcome.

It is not much for my advantage, that the printer delays so long to gratify your expectation. It is a state of mind that is apt to tire and disconcert us; and there are but few pleasures that make us amends for the pain of repeated disappointment. I take it for granted you have not received the volume, not having received it myself, nor indeed heard from Johnson, since he fixed the first of the month for its publication.

What a medley are our public prints: half the page filled with the ruin of the country, and the other half filled with the vices and pleasures of it—here is an island taken, and there a new comedy—here an empire lost, and there an Italian opera, or a lord's rout on a Sunday.

“May it please your lordship! I am an Englishman, and must stand or fall with the nation. Religion, its true palladium, has been stolen away; and it is crumbling into dust. Sin ruins us, the sins of the great especially; and of their sins, especially the violation of the Sabbath, because it is naturally productive of all the rest. If you wish well to our arms, and would be glad to see the

kingdom emerging from her ruins, pay more respect to an ordinance that deserves the deepest! I do not say, pardon this short remonstrance!—The concern I feel for my country, and the interest I have in its prosperity, gave me a right to make it. I am, &c.”

Thus one might write to his lordship, and (I suppose) might be as profitably employed in whistling the tune of an old ballad.

I have no copy of the Preface, nor do I know at present how Johnson and Mr. Newton have settled it. In the matter of it there was nothing offensively peculiar; but it was thought too pious.

Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXV.

To the same.

Aug. 25, 1781.

My dear friend,

WE rejoice with you sincerely in the birth of another son, and in the prospect you have of Mrs. Unwin's recovery; may your three children, and the next three, when they shall make their appearance, prove so many blessings to their parents, and make you wish that you had twice the number. But what made you expect daily, that you should hear from me? Letter for letter is the law of all correspondence whatsoever; and because I wrote last, I have indulged myself for some time in expectation of a sheet from you: not that I govern myself entirely by the punctilio of reciprocity; but having been pretty much occupied of late, I was not sorry to find myself at liberty to exercise my discretion, and furnished with a good excuse, if I chose to be silent.

I expected, as you remember, to have been published last spring, and was disappointed. The delay has afforded me an opportunity to increase the quantity of my publication by about a third; and if my Muse has not forsaken me, which I rather suspect to be the case, may possibly yet add to it. I have a subject in hand which promises me a great abundance of poetical matter, but which, for want of a something I am not able to describe, I cannot at present proceed with. The name of it is Retirement,

and my purpose to recommend the proper improvement of it; to set forth the requisites for that end, and to enlarge upon the happiness of that state of life, when managed as it ought to be. In the course of my journey through this ample theme, I should wish to touch upon the characters, the deficiencies, and the mistakes of thousands, who enter on a scene of retirement, unqualified for it in every respect, and with such designs as have no tendency to promote either their own happiness, or that of others. But, as I have told you before, there are times when I am no more a poet than I am a mathematician; and when such a time occurs, I always think it better to give up the point, than to labour it in vain. I shall yet again be obliged to trouble you for franks. The addition of three thousand lines, or near that number, having occasioned a demand which I did not always foresee; but your obliging friend, and your obliging self, having allowed me the liberty of application, I make it without apology.

The solitude, or rather the duality, of our condition at Olney, seems drawing to a conclusion. You have not forgot, perhaps, that the building we inhabit consists of two mansions. And because you have only seen the inside of that part of it, which is in our occupation, I therefore inform you, that the other end of it is by far the most superb, as well as the most commodious. Lady Austen has seen it, has set her heart upon it, is going to fit it up and furnish it; and if she can get rid of the remaining two years of the lease of her London house, will probably enter upon it in a twelvemonth. You will be pleased with this intelligence, because I have already told you, that she is a woman perfectly well-bred, sensible, and in every respect agreeable; and, above all, because she loves your mother dearly. It has, in my eyes (and I doubt not it will have the same in yours), strong marks of providential interposition. A female friend, and one who bids fair to prove herself worthy of the appellation, comes recommended by a variety of considerations, to such a place as Olney. Since Mr. Newton went, and till this lady came, there was not in the kingdom a retirement more absolutely such than ours. We did not want company; but when it came, we found it agreeable. A person

that has seen much of the world, and understands it well, has high spirits, a lively fancy, and great readiness of conversation, introduces a sprightliness into such a scene as this, which, if it was peaceful before, is not the worse for being a little enlivened. In case of illness too, to which all are liable, it was rather a gloomy prospect, if we allowed ourselves to advert to it, that there was hardly a woman in the place from whom it would have been reasonable to have expected either comfort or assistance. The present curate's wife is a valuable person, but has a family of her own, and, though a neighbour, is not a very near one. But if this plan is effected, we shall be in a manner one family, and I suppose never pass a day without some intercourses with each other.

Your mother sends her warm affections, and welcomes into the world the new-born William. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Feb. 9, 1782.

My dear friend,

I THANK you for Mr. Lowth's verses; they are so good, that had I been present when he spoke them, I should have trembled for the boy, lest the man should disappoint the hopes such early genius had given birth to. It is not common to see so lively a fancy so correctly managed, and so free from irregular exuberance; at so unexperienced an age, fruitful, yet not wanton, and gay without being tawdry. When school-boys write verse, if they have any fire at all, it generally spends itself in flashes and transient sparks, which may indeed suggest an expectation of something better hereafter, but deserve not to be much commended for any real merit of their own. Their wit is generally forced and false, and their sublimity, if they affect any, bombast. I remember well when it was thus with me, and when a turgid, noisy, unmeaning speech in a tragedy, which I should now laugh at, afforded me raptures, and filled me with wonder. It is not, in general, till reading and observation have settled the taste, that we can give the prize to the

best writing, in preference to the worst. Much less are we able to execute what is good ourselves. But Lowth seems to have stepped into excellence at once, and to have gained by intuition what we little folks are happy if we can learn at last, after much labour of our own, and instruction of others. The compliments he pays to the memory of king Charles, he would probably now retract, though he be a bishop, and his majesty's zeal for episcopacy was one of the causes of his ruin. An age or two must pass before some characters can be properly understood. The spirit of party employs itself in veiling their faults, and ascribing to them virtues which they never possessed. See Charles's face, drawn by Clarendon, and it is a handsome portrait. See it more justly exhibited by Mrs. Macauley, and it is deformed to a degree that shocks us. Every feature expresses cunning, employing itself in the maintaining of tyranny; and dissimulation, pretending itself an advocate for truth.

My letters have already apprised you, of that close and intimate connexion that took place between the lady you visited in Queen Anne's Street and us. Nothing could be more promising, though sudden in the commencement. She treated us with as much unreservedness of communication, as if we had been born in the same house, and educated together. At her departure, she herself proposed a correspondence; and because writing does not agree with your mother, proposed a correspondence with me. By her own desire, I wrote to her under the assumed relation of a brother, and she to me as my sister.

I thank you for the search you have made after my intended motto, but I no longer need it.

Our love is always with yourself and family. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXVII.

To the same.

March 18, 1782.

My dear friend,
Nothing has given me so much pleasure, since the publication of my volume, as your favourable opinion of it. It may possibly meet with acceptance

from hundreds, whose commendation would afford me no other satisfaction, than what I should find in the hope that it might do them good. I have some neighbours in this place, who say they like it—doubtless I would rather they should, than that they should not—but I know them to be persons of no more taste in poetry, than skill in the mathematics; their applause, therefore, is a sound that has no music in it for me. But my vanity was not so entirely quiescent when I read your friendly account of the manner it had affected *you*. It was tickled and pleased; and told me in a pretty loud whisper, that others perhaps, of whose taste and judgment I had a high opinion, would approve it too. As a giver of good counsel, I wish to please all; as an author, I am perfectly indifferent to the judgment of all, except the few who are indeed judicious. The circumstance, however, in your letter which pleased me most, was, that you wrote in high spirits, and though you said much, suppressed more, lest you should hurt my delicacy—my delicacy is obliged to you—but you observe it is not so squeamish, but that after it has feasted upon praise expressed, it can find a comfortable dessert in the contemplation of praise implied. I now feel as if I should be glad to begin another volume; but from the will to the power is a step too wide for me to take at present; and the season of the year brings with it so many avocations in the garden, where I am my own *fac totum*; that I have little or no leisure for the quill. I should do myself much wrong, were I to omit mentioning the great complacency with which I read your narrative of Mrs. Unwin's smiles and tears: persons of much sensibility are always persons of taste; and a taste for poetry depends indeed upon that very article more than upon any other. If she had Aristotle by heart, I should not esteem her judgment so highly, were she defective in point of feeling, as I do, and must esteem it, knowing her to have such feelings as Aristotle could not communicate, and as half the readers in the world are destitute of. This it is that makes me set so high a price upon your mother's opinion. She is a critic by nature, and not by rule, and has a perception of what is good or bad in composition, that I never knew deceive her; insomuch, that

when two sorts of expression have pleaded equally for the precedence, in my own esteem, and I have referred, as in such cases I always did, the decision of the point to her, I never knew her at a loss for a just one.

Whether I shall receive any answer from his chancellorship, or not, is at present *in ambiguo*, and will probably continue in the same state of ambiguity much longer. He is so busy a man, and at this time, if the papers may be credited, so particularly busy, that I am forced to mortify myself with the thought, that both my book and my letter may be thrown into a corner, as too insignificant for a statesman's notice, and never found till his executor finds them. 'This affair, however, is neither at my *libitum* nor his. I have sent him the truth. He, that put it into the heart of a certain Eastern monarch, to amuse himself one sleepless night with listening to the records of his kingdom, is able to give birth to such another occasion, and inspire his lordship with a curiosity to know, what he has received from a friend he once loved and valued. If an answer comes, however, you shall not long be a stranger to the contents of it.

I have read your letter to their worships, and much approve of it. May it have the desired effect it ought! If not, still you have acted a humane and becoming part; and the poor aching toes and fingers of the prisoners will not appear in judgment against you. I have made a slight alteration in the last sentence, which perhaps you will not disapprove. Yours ever.

LETTER CLXVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

April 1, 1782.

My dear friend,

I COULD not have found a better trumpeter. Your zeal to serve the interest of my volume, together with your extensive acquaintance, qualify you perfectly for that most useful office. Methinks I see you with the long tube at your mouth, proclaiming to your numerous connexions my poetical merits, and at proper intervals levelling it at Olney, and pouring into my ear the welcome sound of their approbation. I need not

encourage you to proceed, your breath will never fail in such a cause; and thus encouraged, I myself perhaps may proceed also; and when the versifying fit returns, produce another volume. Alas! we shall never receive such commendations from him on the woolsack, as your good friend has lavished upon us. Whence I learn, that however important I may be in my own eyes, I am very insignificant in his. To make me amends, however, for this mortification, Mr. Newton tells me, that my book is likely to run, spread, and prosper; that the grave cannot help smiling, and the gay are struck with the truth of it: and that it is likely to find its way into his majesty's hands, being put into a proper course for that purpose. Now if the king should fall in love with my Muse, and with you for her sake, such an event would make us ample amends for the chancellor's indifference, and you might be the first divine that ever reached a mitre, from the shoulders of a poet. But (I believe) we must be content, I with my gains, if I gain any thing, and you with the pleasure of knowing that I am a gainer.

We laughed heartily at your answer to little John's question; and yet I think you might have given him a direct answer—"There are various sorts of cleverness, my dear; I do not know that mine lies in the poetical way, but I can do ten times more towards the entertainment of company, in the way of conversation, than our friend at Olney. He can rhyme, and I can rattle. If he had my talent, or I had his, we should be too charming, and the world would almost adore us." Yours.

LETTER CLXIX.

To the same.

June 12, 1782.

My dear friend,

EVERY extraordinary occurrence in our lives affords us an opportunity to learn, if we will, something more of our own hearts and tempers than we were before aware of. It is easy to promise ourselves before-hand, that our conduct shall be wise, or moderate, or resolute, on any given occasion. But when that occasion occurs, we do not always find it easy to make good the promise: such a differ-

ence there is between theory and practice. Perhaps this is no new remark; but it is not a whit the worse for being old, if it be true.

Before I had published, I said to myself—You and I, Mr. Cowper, will not concern ourselves much about what the critics may say of our book. But having once sent my wits for a venture, I soon became anxious about the issue, and found that I could not be satisfied with a warm place in my own good graces, unless my friends were pleased with me as much as I pleased myself. Meeting with their approbation, I began to feel the workings of ambition. It is well, said I, that my friends are pleased, but friends are sometimes partial; and mine, I have reason to think, are not altogether free from bias. Methinks I should like to hear a stranger or two speak well of me. I was presently gratified by the approbation of the *London Magazine*, and the *Gentleman's*, particularly by that of the former, and by the plaudit of Dr. Franklin. By the way, magazines are publications we have but little respect for, till we ourselves are chronicled in them; and then they assume an importance in our esteem, which before we could not allow them. But the *Monthly Review*, the most formidable of all my judges, is still behind. What will that critical Rhadamanthus say, when my shivering genius shall appear before him? Still he keeps me in hot water, and I must wait another month for his award. Alas! when I wish for a favourable sentence from that quarter (to confess a weakness, that I should not confess to all), I feel myself not a little influenced by a tender regard to my reputation here, even among my neighbours at Olney. Here are watch-makers, who themselves are wits, and who, at present, perhaps, think me one. Here is a carpenter, and a baker; and, not to mention others, here is your idol, Mr. —, whose smile is fame. All these read the *Monthly Review*, and all these will set me down for a dunce, if those terrible critics should shew them the example. But oh! wherever else I am accounted dull, dear Mr. Griffith, let me pass for a genius at Olney.

We are sorry for little William's illness. It is however the privilege of infancy, to recover, almost immediately, what it has lost by sickness. We are

sorry, too, for Mr. —'s dangerous condition; but he that is well prepared for the great journey, cannot enter on it too soon for himself, though his friends will weep at his departure. Yours.

LETTER CLXX.

To the same.

July 16, 1782.

My dear friend,

THOUGH some people pretend to be clever in the way of prophetic forecast, and to have a peculiar talent of sagacity, by which they can divine the meaning of a providential dispensation, while its consequences are yet in embryo—I do not. There is at this time to be found, I suppose, in the Cabinet, and in both Houses, a greater assemblage of able men, both as speakers and counsellors, than ever were contemporary in the same land. A man, not accustomed to trace the workings of Providence as recorded in Scripture, and that has given no attention to this particular subject, while employed in the study of profane history, would assert boldly, that it is a token for good, that much may be expected from them, and that the country, though heavily afflicted, is not yet to be despaired of, distinguished as she is by so many characters of the highest class. Thus he would say; and I do not deny, that the event might justify his skill in prognostics. God works by means; and in a case of great national perplexity and distress, wisdom and political ability seem to be the only natural means of deliverance. But a mind more religiously inclined, and perhaps a little tinctured with melancholy, might, with equal probability of success, hazard a conjecture directly opposite. Alas! what is the wisdom of man, especially when he trusts in it as the only God of his confidence?—When I consider the general contempt that is poured upon all things sacred, the profusion, the dissipation, the knavish cunning of some, the rapacity of others, and the impenitence of all, I am rather inclined to fear, that God, who honours himself by bringing human glory to shame, and by disappointing the expectations of those whose trust is in creatures, has signalized the present day as a day of much human sufficiency and strength, has

brought together from all quarters of the land the most illustrious men to be found in it, only that he may prove the vanity of idols; and that when a great empire is falling, and he has pronounced a sentence of ruin against it, the inhabitants, be they weak or strong, wise or foolish, must fall with it. I am rather confirmed in this persuasion by observing, that these luminaries of the state had no sooner fixed themselves in the political heaven, than the fall of the brightest of them shook all the rest. The arch of their power was no sooner struck, than the key-stone slipt out of its place; those that were closest in connexion with it followed, and the whole building, new as it is, seems to be already a ruin. If a man should hold this language, who could convict him of absurdity? The marquis of Rockingham is minister; all the world rejoices, anticipating success in war, and a glorious peace. The marquis of Rockingham is dead; all the world is afflicted, and relapses into its former despondence. What does this prove, but that the marquis was their Almighty, and that now he is gone, they know no other? But let us wait a little, they will find another. Perhaps the duke of Portland, or perhaps the unpopular —, whom they now represent as a devil, may obtain that honour. Thus God is forgot; and when he is, his judgments are generally his remembrancers.

How shall I comfort you upon the subject of your present distress? Pardon me that I find myself obliged to smile at it; because who but yourself would be distressed upon such an occasion? You have behaved politely and like a gentleman, you have hospitably offered your house to a stranger, who could not, in your neighbourhood at least, have been comfortably accommodated any where else. He, by neither refusing nor accepting an offer that did him too much honour, has disgraced himself, but not you. I think for the future you must be more cautious of laying yourself open to a stranger, and never again expose yourself to incivilities from an archdeacon you are not acquainted with.

Though I did not mention it, I felt with you what you suffered by the loss of Miss —; I was only silent because I could minister no consolation to you on such a subject, but what I knew your

mind to be already stored with. Indeed the application of comfort in such cases, is a nice business, and perhaps when best managed, might as well be let alone. I remember reading, many years ago, a long treatise on the subject of consolation, written in French, the author's name I forgot, but I wrote these words in the margin:—*Special consolation!* at least for a Frenchman, who is a creature the most easily comforted of any in the world!

We are as happy in lady Austen, and she in us, as ever; having a lively imagination, and being passionately desirous of consolidating all into one family (for she has taken her leave of London), she has just sprung a project which serves, at least, to amuse us, and to make us laugh; it is to hire Mr. Small's house, on the top of Clifton hill, which is large, commodious, and handsome, will hold us conveniently, and any friends who may occasionally favour us with a visit; the house is furnished, but if it can be hired without the furniture, will let for a trifle; your sentiments if you please upon this *demarche!*

I send you my last frank; our best love attends you individually, and altogether. I give you joy of a happy change in the season, and myself also. I have filled four sides in less time than two would have cost me a week ago; such is the effect of sunshine upon such a butterfly as I am. Yours.

LETTER CLXXI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 3, 1782.

My dear friend,
ENTERTAINING some hope, that Mr. Newton's next letter would furnish me with the means of satisfying your enquiry on the subject of Dr. Johnson's opinion, I have till now delayed my answer to your last; but the information is not yet come, Mr. Newton having intermitted a week more than usual, since his last writing. When I receive it, favourable or not, it shall be communicated to you; but I am not over sanguine in my expectations from that quarter. Very learned and very critical heads are hard to please. He may perhaps treat me with lenity for the sake of the subject and design; but the compo-

sition, I think, will hardly escape his censure. But though all doctors may not be of the same mind, there is one doctor at least, whom I have lately discovered, my professed admirer. He too, like Johnson, was with difficulty persuaded to read, having an aversion to all poetry, except the *Night Thoughts*, which on a certain occasion, when being confined on board a ship he had no other employment, he got by heart. He was however prevailed upon, and read me several times over; so that if my volume had sailed with him, instead of doctor Young's, I perhaps might have occupied that shelf in his memory, which he then allotted to the doctor.

It is a sort of paradox, but it is true: We are never more in danger than when we think ourselves most secure, nor in reality more secure, than when we seem to be most in danger. Both sides of this apparent contradiction were lately verified in my experience.—Passing from the green-house to the barn, I saw three kittens (for we have so many in our retinue) looking with fixt attention on something which lay on the threshold of a door nailed up. I took but little notice of them at first, but a loud hiss engaged me to attend more closely, when, behold—a viper! the largest that I remember to have seen, rearing itself, darting its forked tongue, and ejaculating the aforesaid hiss at the nose of a kitten, almost in contact with his lips. I ran into the hall for a hoe with a long handle, with which I intended to assail him, and, returning in a few seconds, missed him; he was gone, and I feared had escaped me. Still, however, the kitten sat watching immoveably on the same spot. I concluded, therefore, that sliding between the door and the threshold, he had found his way out of the garden into the yard.—I went round immediately, and there found him in close conversation with the old cat, whose curiosity being excited by so novel an appearance, inclined her to pat his head repeatedly with her forefoot, with her claws, however, sheathed, and not in anger, but in the way of philosophic inquiry and examination. To prevent her falling a victim to so laudable an exercise of her talents, I interposed in a moment with the hoe, and performed upon him an act of decapitation, which, though not immediately mortal, proved so in the end. Had he

slid into the passages, where it is dark, or had he, when in the yard, met with no interruption from the cat, and secreted himself in any of the out-houses; it is hardly possible but that some of the family must have been bitten; he might have been trodden upon without being perceived, and have slipped away before the sufferer could have distinguished what foe had wounded him. Three years ago we discovered one in the same place, which the barber slew with a trowel.

Our proposed removal to Mr. Small's, was, as you may suppose, a jest, or rather a joco-serious matter. We never looked upon it as entirely feasible; yet we saw in it something so like practicability, that we did not esteem it altogether unworthy of our attention. It was one of those projects which people of lively imaginations play with, and admire for a few days, and then break in pieces. Lady Austen returned on Thursday from London, where she spent the last fortnight, and whither she was called by an unexpected opportunity to dispose of the remainder of her lease. She has therefore no longer any connexion with the great city, and no house but at Olney. Her abode is to be at the vicarage, where she has hired as much room as she wants, which she will embellish with her own furniture, and which she will occupy as soon as the minister's wife has produced another child, which is expected to make its entry in October.

Mr. Bull, a dissenting minister of Newport, a learned, ingenious, good-natured, pious friend of ours, who sometimes visits us, and whom we visited last week, has put into my hands three volumes of French poetry, composed by madame Guion—a quietist, say you, and a fanatic, I will have nothing to do with her.—'Tis very well, you are welcome to have nothing to do with her; but in the mean time her verse is the only French verse I ever read that I found agreeable; there is a neatness in it equal to that which we applaud, with so much reason, in the compositions of Prior. I have translated several of them, and shall proceed in my translations, till I have filled a Lilliputian paper-book I happen to have by me, which, when filled, I shall present to Mr. Bull. He is her passionate admirer; rode twenty miles to see her picture in the house of a stranger, which

stranger politely insisted on his acceptance of it, and it now hangs over his chimney. It is a striking portrait, too characteristic not to be a strong resemblance; and were it encompassed with a glory, instead of being dressed in a nun's hood, might pass for the face of an angel. Yours.

LETTER CLXXII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Nov. 18, 1782.

My dear William,

ON the part of the poor, and on our part, be pleased to make acknowledgments, such as the occasion calls for, to our beneficial friend Mr. ——. I call him ours, because having experienced his kindness to myself in a former instance, and in the present his disinterested readiness to succour the distressed, my ambition will be satisfied with nothing less. He may depend upon the strictest secrecy; no creature shall hear him mentioned, either now or hereafter, as the person from whom we have received this bounty. But when I speak of him, or hear him spoken of by others, which sometimes happens, I shall not forget what is due to so rare a character. I wish, and your mother wishes it too, that he could sometimes take us in his way to ———; he will find us happy to receive a person, whom we must needs account it an honour to know. We shall exercise our best discretion in the disposal of the money; but in this town, where the Gospel has been preached so many years, where the people have been favoured so long with laborious and conscientious ministers, it is not an easy thing to find those who make no profession of religion at all, and are yet proper objects of charity. The profane are so profane, so drunken, dissolute, and, in every respect, worthless, that to make them partakers of his bounty, would be to abuse it.—We promise, however, that none shall touch it but such as are miserably poor, yet at the same time industrious and honest, two characters frequently united here, where the most watchful and unremitting labour will hardly procure them bread. We make none but the cheapest laces, and the price of them is fallen almost to nothing. Thanks are

due to yourself likewise, and are hereby accordingly rendered, for waving your claim in behalf of your own parishioners. You are always with them, and they are always, at least some of them, the better for your residence among them. Olney is a populous place, inhabited chiefly by the half-starved and the ragged of the earth; and it is not possible for our small party, and small ability, to extend their operations so far as to be much felt among such numbers. Accept, therefore, your share of their gratitude, and be convinced, that when they pray for a blessing upon those who relieved their wants, He that answers that prayer, and when he answers it, will remember his servant at Stock.

I little thought when I was writing the history of John Gilpin, that he would appear in print. I intended to laugh, and to make two or three others laugh, of whom you were one. But now all the world laugh, at least if they have the same relish for a tale ridiculous in itself, and quaintly told, as we have. Well—they do not always laugh so innocently, and at so small an expense—for in a world like this, abounding with subjects for satire, and with satirical wits to mark them, a laugh that hurts nobody, has at least the grace of novelty to recommend it. Swift's darling motto was, *Vive la bagatelle*—a good wish for a philosopher of his complexion, the greater part of whose wisdom, whencesoever it came, most certainly came not from above. *La bagatelle* has no enemy in me, though it has neither so warm a friend, nor so able a one, as it had in him. If I trifle, and merely trifle, it is because I am reduced to it by necessity—a melancholy that nothing else so effectually disperses, engages me sometimes in the arduous task of being merry by force. And, strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote, have been written in the saddest mood, and, but for that saddest mood, perhaps had never been written at all.

I hear, from Mrs. Newton, that some great persons have spoken with great approbation of a certain book. Who they are, and what they have said, I am to be told in a future letter. The Monthly Reviewers, in the mean time, have satisfied me well enough. Yours, my dear William.

LETTER CLXXIII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

April 5, 1783.

My dear friend,

WHEN one has a letter to write, there is nothing more useful than to make a beginning. In the first place, because unless it be begun, there is no good reason to hope it will ever be ended; and, secondly, because the beginning is half the business, it being much more difficult to put the pen in motion at first, than to continue the progress of it, when once moved.

Mrs. C——'s illness, likely to prove mortal, and seizing her at such a time, has excited much compassion in my breast, and in Mrs. Unwin's, both for her and her daughter. To have parted with a child she loves so much; intending soon to follow her; to find herself arrested before she could set out, and at so great a distance from her most valued relations, her daughter's life, too, threatened by a disorder not often curable; are circumstances truly affecting. She has indeed much natural fortitude, and, to make her condition still more tolerable, a good Christian hope for her support. But so it is, that the distresses of those, who least need our pity, excite it most; the amiableness of the character engages our sympathy, and we mourn for persons for whom perhaps we might more reasonably rejoice. There is still, however, a possibility that she may recover; an event we *must* wish for, though for her to depart would be far better. Thus we would always withhold from the skies those who alone can reach them, at least till we are ready to bear them company.

Present our love, if you please, to miss C——. I saw, in the Gentleman's Magazine for last month, an account of a physician who has discovered a new method of treating consumptive cases, which has succeeded wonderfully in the trial. He finds the seat of the distemper in the stomach, and cures it principally by emetics. The old method of encountering the disorder has proved so unequal to the task, that I should be much inclined to any new practice that comes well recommended. He is spoken of as a sensible and judicious man, but his name I have forgot.

Our love to all under your roof, and in particular to miss Catlett, if she is with you. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXXIV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

June 8, 1783.

My dear William,

OUR severest winter, commonly called the spring, is now over, and I find myself seated in my favourite recess, the green-house. In such a situation, so silent, so shady, where no human foot is heard, and where only my myrtles presume to peep in at the window, you may suppose I have no interruption to complain of, and that my thoughts are perfectly at my command. But the beauties of the spot are themselves an interruption, my attention being called upon by those very myrtles, by a double row of grass pinks, just beginning to blossom, and by a bed of beans already in bloom; and you are to consider it, if you please, as no small proof of my regard, that though you have so many powerful rivals, I disengage myself from them all, and devote this hour entirely to you.

You are not acquainted with the rev. Mr. Bull, of Newport; perhaps it is as well for you that you are not. You would regret still more than you do, that there are so many miles interposed between us. He spends part of the day with us to-morrow. A dissenter, but a liberal one; a man of letters and of genius; master of a fine imagination, or rather not master of it; an imagination, which, when he finds himself in the company he loves and can confide in, runs away with him into such fields of speculation, as amuse and enliven every other imagination that has the happiness to be of the party: at other times he has a tender and delicate sort of melancholy in his disposition, not less agreeable in its way. No men are better qualified for companions, in such a world as this, than men of such a temperament. Every scene of life has two sides, a dark and a bright one; and the mind, that has an equal mixture of melancholy and vivacity, is best of all qualified for the contemplation of either. He can be lively without levity, and pensive without dejection. Such a man is Mr. Bull. But

—he smokes tobacco—nothing is perfect—

*Nihil est ab omni
Parte beatum.*

On the other side I send you a something, a song, if you please, composed last Thursday—the incident happened the day before*. Yours.

LETTER CLXXV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

July 27, 1783.

My dear friend,

You cannot have more pleasure in receiving a letter from me, than I should find in writing it, were it not almost impossible in such a place to find a subject.

I live in a world abounding with incidents, upon which many grave, and perhaps some profitable observations might be made: but those incidents never reaching my unfortunate ears, both the entertaining narrative, and the reflection it might suggest, are to me annihilated and lost. I look back to the past week, and say, What did it produce? I ask the same question of the week preceding, and duly receive the same answer from both—Nothing!—A situation like this, in which I am as unknown to the world as I am ignorant of all that passes in it, in which I have nothing to do but to think, would exactly suit me, were my subjects of meditation as agreeable as my leisure is uninterrupted. My passion for retirement is not at all abated, after so many years spent in the most sequestered state, but rather increased: a circumstance I should esteem wonderful, to a degree not to be accounted for, considering the condition of my mind; did I not know that we think as we are made to think, and of course approve and prefer, as Providence, who appoints the bounds of our habitation, chooses for us. Thus I am both free and a prisoner at the same time. The world is before me; I am not shut up in the Bastile; there are no moats about my castle, no locks upon my gates, of which I have not the key—but an invisible, uncontrollable agency, a local attachment, an in-

clination more forcible than I ever felt even to the place of my birth, serves me for prison walls, and for bounds which I cannot pass. In former years I have known sorrow, and before I had ever tasted of spiritual trouble. The effect was an abhorrence of the scene in which I had suffered so much, and a weariness of those objects which I had so long looked at with an eye of despondency and dejection. But it is otherwise with me now. The same cause subsisting, and in a much more powerful degree, fails to produce its natural effect. The very stones in the garden walls are my intimate acquaintance. I should miss almost the minutest object, and be disagreeably affected by its removal; and am persuaded, that, were it possible I could leave this incommensurable nook for a twelvemonth, I should return to it again with rapture, and be transported with the sight of objects, which, to all the world beside, would be at least indifferent; some of them perhaps, such as the ragged thatch, and the tottering walls of the neighbouring cottages, disgusting. But so it is; and it is so, because here is to be my abode, and because such is the appointment of Him that placed me in it.

*Iste terrarum nihi præter omnes
Angulus ridet.*

It is the place of all the world I love the most; not for any happiness it affords me, but because here I can be miserable with most convenience to myself, and with the least disturbance to others.

You wonder, and (I dare say) unfeignedly, because you do not think yourself entitled to such praise, that I prefer your style, as an historian, to that of the two most renowned writers of history the present day has seen. That you may not suspect me of having said more than my real opinion will warrant, I will tell you why. In your style I see no affectation. In every line of theirs I see nothing else. They disgust me always, Robertson with his pomp and his strut, and Gibbon with his finical and French manners. You are as correct as they. You express yourself with as much precision. Your words are ranged with as much propriety: but you do not set your periods to a tune. They discover a perpetual desire to exhibit themselves to advantage, whereas your subject engrosses you. They sing, and you say;

* Here followed his song of the Rose.

which, as history is a thing to be said, and not sung, is, in my judgment, very much to your advantage. A writer that despises their tricks, and is yet neither inelegant nor inharmonious, proves himself, by that single circumstance, a man of superior judgment and ability to them both. You have my reasons. I honour a manly character, in which good sense, and a desire of doing good, are the predominant features — but affectation is an emetic.

LETTER CLXXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 4, 1783.

MY dear William, I feel myself sensibly obliged by the interest you take in the success of my productions. Your feelings upon the subject are such as I should have myself, had I an opportunity of calling Johnson aside to make the inquiry you propose. But I am pretty well prepared for the worst; and so long as I have the opinion of a few capable judges in my favour, and am thereby convinced that I have neither disgraced myself nor my subject, shall not feel myself disposed to any extreme anxiety about the sale. To aim, with success, at the spiritual good of mankind, and to become popular by writing on scriptural subjects, were an unreasonable ambition, even for a poet to entertain, in days like these. Verse may have many charms, but has none powerful enough to conquer the aversion of a dissipated age to such instruction. Ask the question therefore boldly, and be not mortified, even though he should shake his head, and drop his chin; for it is no more than we have reason to expect. We will lay the fault upon the vice of the times, and we will acquit the poet.

I am glad you were pleased with my Latin ode, and indeed with my English dirge, as much as I was myself. The tune laid me under a disadvantage, obliging me to write in Alexandrines; which, I suppose, would suit no ear but a French one; neither did I intend any thing more than that the subject, and the words, should be sufficiently accommodated to the music. The ballad is a species of poetry, I believe, peculiar to this country, equally adapted to the drollest and

the most tragical subjects. Simplicity and ease are its proper characteristics. Our forefathers excelled in it; but we moderns have lost the art. It is observed, that we have few good English odes. But to make amends, we have many excellent ballads, not inferior perhaps in true poetical merit to some of the very best odes that the Greek or Latin languages have to boast of. It is a sort of composition I was ever fond of; and if graver matters had not called me another way, should have addicted myself to it more than to any other. I inherit a taste for it from my father, who succeeded well in it himself, and who lived at a time when the best pieces of that way were produced. What can be prettier than Gay's ballad, or rather Swift's, Arbuthnot's, Pope's, and Gay's, in the *What do you call it*—" 'Twas when the seas were roaring." I have been well informed, that they all contributed, and that the most celebrated association of clever fellows this country ever saw, did not think it beneath them to unite their strength and abilities in the composition of a song. The success however answered their wishes. The ballads that Bourne has translated, beautiful in themselves, are still more beautiful in his version of them, infinitely surpassing, in my judgment, all that Ovid or Tibullus have left behind them. They are quite as elegant, and far more touching and pathetic, than the tenderest strokes of either.

So much for ballads, and ballad writers.—"A worthy subject," you will say, "for a man, whose head might be filled with better things;—and it is filled with better things; but to so ill a purpose, that I thrust into it all manner of topics, that may prove more amusing; as for instance, I have two goldfinches, which in the summer occupy the green house. A few days since, being employed in cleaning out their cages, I placed that which I had in hand upon the table, while the other hung against the wall: the windows and the doors stood wide open. I went to fill the fountain at the pump, and, on my return, was not a little surprised to find a goldfinch sitting on the top of the cage I had been cleaning, and singing to, and kissing the goldfinch within. I approached him; and he discovered no fear; still nearer, and he discovered none. I advanced my hand towards him, and he took no notice of it.

I seized him, and supposed I had caught a new bird; but casting my eye upon the other cage, perceived my mistake. Its inhabitant, during my absence, had contrived to find an opening, where the wire had been a little bent, and made no other use of the escape it had afforded him, than to salute his friend, and to converse with him more intimately than he had done before. I returned him to his proper mansion, but in vain. In less than a minute, he had thrust his little person through the aperture again, and again perched upon his neighbour's cage, kissing as at the first, and singing, as if transported with the fortunate adventure. I could not but respect such friendship, as, for the sake of its gratification, had twice declined an opportunity to be free; and, consenting to their union, resolved, that for the future one cage should hold them both. I am glad of such incidents. For, at a pinch, and when I need entertainment, the versification of them serves to divert me.

I transcribe for you a piece of madam Guion; not as the best, but as being shorter than many, and as good as most of them. Yours ever.

LETTER CLXXVII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 29, 1783.

My dear William,

WE are sorry that you and your household partake so largely of the ill effects of this unhealthy season. You are happy however in having hitherto escaped the epidemic fever, which has prevailed much in this part of the kingdom, and carried many off. Your mother and I are well. After more than a fortnight's indisposition, which slight appellation is quite adequate to the description of all I suffered, I am at length restored by a grain or two of emetic tartar. It is a tax I generally pay in autumn. By this time, I hope, a purer ether than we have seen for months, and these brighter suns than the summer had to boast, have cheered your spirits, and made your existence more comfortable. We are rational: but we are animal too, and therefore subject to the influences of the weather. The cattle in the fields show evident symptoms of lassitude and dis-

gust in an unpleasant season; and we, their lords and masters, are constrained to sympathize with them: the only difference between us is, that they know not the cause of their dejection, and we do; but, for our humiliation, are equally at a loss to cure it. Upon this account I have sometimes wished myself a philosopher. How happy, in comparison with myself, does the sagacious investigator of nature seem, whose fancy is ever employed in the invention of *hypotheses*, and his reason in the support of them! While he is accounting for the origin of the winds, he has no leisure to attend to their influence upon himself; and, while he considers what the sun is made of, forgets that he has not shone for a month. One project indeed supplants another. The *vortices* of Descartes gave way to the gravitation of Newton, and this again is threatened by the electrical fluid of a modern. One generation blows bubbles, and the next breaks them. But in the mean time your philosopher is a happy man. He escapes a thousand inquietudes, to which the indolent are subject; and finds his occupation, whether it be the pursuit of a butterfly or a demonstration, the wholesomest exercise in the world. As he proceeds, he applauds himself. His discoveries, though eventually perhaps they prove but dreams, are to him realities. The world gaze at him, as he does at new phenomena in the heavens, and perhaps understand him as little. But this does not prevent their praises, nor at all disturb him in the enjoyment of that self-complacency, to which his imaginary success entitles him. He wears his honours while he lives; and, if another strips them off when he has been dead a century, it is no great matter; he can then make shift without them.

I have said a great deal upon this subject, and know not what it all amounts to. I did not intend a syllable of it when I began. But, *currente calamo*, I stumbled upon it. My end is to amuse myself and you. The former of these two points is secured. I shall be happy if I do not miss the latter.

By the way, what is your opinion of these air-balloons? I am quite charmed with the discovery. Is it not possible (do you suppose) to convey such a quantity of inflammable air into the stomach and abdomen, that the philo-

sopher, no longer gravitating to a centre, shall ascend by his own comparative levity, and never stop till he has reached the medium exactly *in equilibrio* with himself? May he not, by the help of a pasteboard rudder, attached to his posteriors, steer himself in that purer element with ease, and again, by a slow and gradual discharge of his aerial contents, recover his former tendency to the earth, and descend without the smallest danger or inconvenience? These things are worth inquiry, and (I dare say) they will be inquired after as they deserve. The *pennæ non homini datæ*, are likely to be less regretted than they were; and perhaps a flight of academicians, and a covey of fine ladies, may be no uncommon spectacle in the next generation. A letter, which appeared in the public prints last week, convinces me that the learned are not without hopes of some such improvement upon this discovery. The author is a sensible and ingenious man; and, under a reasonable apprehension, that the ignorant may feel themselves inclined to laugh, upon a subject that affects himself with the utmost seriousness, with much good manners and management, bespeaks their patience, suggesting many good consequences, that may result from a course of experiments upon this machine; and, amongst others, that it may be of use in ascertaining the shape of continents and islands, and the face of wide-extended and far-distant countries; an end not to be hoped for, unless by these means of extraordinary elevation the human prospect may be immensely enlarged, and the philosopher, exalted to the skies, attain a view of the whole hemisphere at once. But whether he is to ascend by the mere inflation of his person, as hinted above, or whether in a sort of hand-box, supported upon balloons, is not yet apparent, nor (I suppose) even in his own idea perfectly decided. Yours, my dear William.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Oct. 6, 1783.

My dear friend,
It is indeed a melancholy consideration, that the Gospel, whose direct tendency is to promote the happiness of mankind, in the present as well as in the life to

come, and which so effectually answers the design of its Author, whenever it is well understood and sincerely believed, should, through the ignorance, the bigotry, the superstition of its professors, and the ambition of popes, and princes, the tools of popes, have produced, incidentally, so much mischief; only furnishing the world with a plausible excuse to worry each other, while they sanctified the worst cause with the specious pretext of zeal for the furtherance of the best.

Angels descend from heaven to publish peace between man and his Maker—the Prince of Peace himself comes to confirm and establish it; and war, hatred, and desolation, are the consequence. Thousands quarrel about the interpretation of a book, which none of them understand. He that is slain, dies firmly persuaded, that the crown of martyrdom expects him; and he that slew him, is equally convinced that he has done God service. In reality, they are both mistaken, and equally unentitled to the honour they arrogate to themselves. If a multitude of blind men should set out for a certain city, and dispute about the right road, till a battle ensued between them, the probable effect would be, that none of them would ever reach it; and such a fray, preposterous and shocking in the extreme, would exhibit a picture in some degree resembling the original of which we have been speaking. And why is not the world thus occupied at present? even because they have exchanged a zeal, that was no better than madness, for an indifference equally pitiable and absurd. The holy sepulchre has lost its importance in the eyes of nations called Christian, not because the light of true wisdom has delivered them from a superstitious attachment to the spot, but because he that was buried in it is no longer regarded by them as the Saviour of the world. The exercise of reason, enlightened by philosophy, has cured them indeed of the misery of an abused understanding; but together with the delusion they have lost the substance, and, for the sake of the lies that were grafted upon it, have quarrelled with the truth itself. Here, then, we see the *ne plus ultra* of human wisdom, at least in affairs of religion. It enlightens the mind with respect to non-essentials, but, with respect to that in which the essence of Christianity consists, leaves

it perfectly in the dark. It can discover many errors, that in different ages have disgraced the faith; but it is only to make way for the admission of one more fatal than them all, which represents that faith itself as a delusion. Why those evils have been permitted, shall be known hereafter. One thing in the mean time is certain; that the folly and frenzy of the professed disciples of the Gospel, have been more dangerous to its interests, than all the avowed hostilities of its adversaries; and perhaps for this cause these mischiefs might be suffered to prevail for a season, that its divine original and nature might be the more illustrated, when it should appear that it was able to stand its ground for ages, against that most formidable of all attacks, the indiscretion of its friends. The outrages, that have followed this perversion of the truth, have proved indeed a stumbling block to individuals; the wise of this world, with all their wisdom, have not been able to distinguish between the blessing and abuse of it. Voltaire was offended, and Gibbon has turned his back; but the flock of Christ is still nourished, and still increases, notwithstanding the unbelief of a philosopher is able to convert bread into a stone, and a fish into a serpent.

I am much obliged to you for the voyages which I received, and began to read last night. My imagination is so captivated upon these occasions, that I seem to partake with the navigators in all the dangers they encountered. I lose my anchor: my main-sail is rent into shreds; I kill a shark, and by signs converse with a Patagonian; and all this without moving from the fire-side. The principal fruits of these circuits, that have been made around the globe, seem likely to be the amusement of those that staid at home. Discoveries have been made, but such discoveries as will hardly satisfy the expense of such undertakings. We brought away an Indian, and, having debauched him, we sent him home again to communicate the infection to his country—fine sport, to be sure, but such as will not defray the cost. Nations that live upon bread-fruit, and have no mines to make them worthy of our acquaintance, will be but little visited for the future. So much the better for them; their poverty is indeed their mercy. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXXIX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Nov. 10, 1783.

My dear William,
I HAVE lost, and wasted, almost all my writing time, in making an alteration in the verses I either inclose, or subjoin, for I know not which will be the case at present. If prose comes readily, I shall transcribe them on another sheet, otherwise on this. You will understand, before you have read many of them, that they are not for the press. I lay you under no other injunctions. The unkind behaviour of our acquaintance, though it is possible that, in some instances, it may not much affect our happiness, nor engage many of our thoughts, will sometimes obtrude itself upon us with a degree of importunity not easily resisted; and then, perhaps, though almost insensible of it before, we feel more than the occasion will justify. In such a moment it was, that I conceived this poem, and gave loose to a degree of resentment, which perhaps I ought not to have indulged, but which in a cooler hour I cannot altogether condemn. My former intimacy with the two characters was such, that I could not but feel myself provoked by the neglect with which they both treated me on a late occasion. So much by way of preface.

You ought not to have supposed, that if you had visited us last summer, the pleasure of the interview would have been all your own. By such an imagination you wrong both yourself and us. Do you suppose we do not love you? You cannot suspect your mother of coldness; and as to me, assure yourself I have no friend in the world with whom I communicate without the least reserve, yourself excepted. Take heart then; and when you find a favourable opportunity to come, assure yourself of such a welcome from us both, as you have a right to look for. But I have observed in your two last letters, somewhat of a dejection and melancholy, that I am afraid you do not sufficiently strive against. I suspect you of being too sedentary. "You cannot walk." Why you cannot is best known to yourself. I am sure your legs are long enough, and your person does not overload them. But I beseech you ride, and ride often. I think I have heard

you say you cannot even do that without an object. Is not health an object? Is not a new prospect, which in most countries is gained at the end of every mile, an object. Assure yourself, that easy chairs are no friends to cheerfulness, and that a long winter, spent by the fire-side, is a prelude to an unhealthy spring. Every thing I see in the fields, is to me an object; and I can look at the same rivulet, or at a handsome tree, every day of my life, with new pleasure. This indeed is partly the effect of a natural taste for rural beauty, and partly the effect of habit, for I never, in all my life, have let slip the opportunity of breathing fresh air, and conversing with nature, when I could fairly catch it. I earnestly recommend a cultivation of the same taste to you, suspecting that you have neglected it, and suffer for doing so.

LETTER CLXXX.

To the same.

Nov. 24, 1783.

My dear friend,

An evening unexpectedly retired, and which your mother and I spend without company (an occurrence far from frequent), affords me a favourable opportunity to write by to-morrow's post, which else I could not have found. You are very good to consider my literary necessities with so much attention, and I feel proportionably grateful. Blair's Lectures (though I suppose they must make a part of my private studies, not being *ad captum feminarum*) will be perfectly welcome. You say you felt my verses. I assure you that in this you followed my example, for I felt them first. A man's lordship is nothing to me, any farther than in connexion with qualities that entitle him to my respect. If he thinks himself privileged by it to treat me with neglect, I am his humble servant, and shall never be at a loss to render him an equivalent. I will not, however, belie my knowledge of mankind so much, as to seem surprised at a treatment which I had abundant reason to expect. To these men, with whom I was once intimate, and for many years, I am no longer necessary, no longer convenient, or in any respect an object. They think of me as of the man in the moon; and

whether I have a lantern, or a dog and faggot, or whether I have neither of those desirable accommodations, is to them a matter of perfect indifference: upon that point we are agreed; our indifference is mutual; and were I to publish again, which is not possible, I should give them a proof of it.

L'Estrange's Josephus has lately furnished us with evening lectures. But the historian is so tediously circumstantial, and the translator so insupportably coarse and vulgar, that we are all three weary of him. How would Tacitus have shone upon such a subject, great master as he was of the art of description; concise without obscurity, and affecting without being poetical. But so it was ordered, and for wise reasons no doubt, that the greatest calamities any people ever suffered, and an accomplishment of one of the most signal prophecies in the Scripture, should be recorded by one of the worst writers. The man was a temporizer too, and courted the favour of his Roman masters, at the expense of his own creed; or else an infidel, and absolutely disbelieved it. You will think me very difficult to please: I quarrel with Josephus for the want of elegance, and with some of our modern historians for having too much. With him, for running right forward like a gazette, without stopping to make a single observation by the way; and with them for pretending to delineate characters that existed two thousand years ago, and to discover the motives by which they were influenced, with the same precision as if they had been their contemporaries.—Simplicity is become a very rare quality in a writer. In the decline of great kingdoms, and where refinement in all the arts is carried to an excess, I suppose it is always rare. The later Roman writers are remarkable for false ornament; they were yet no doubt admired by the readers of their own day; and with respect to authors of the present æra, the most popular among them appear to me equally censurable on the same account. Swift and Addison were simple.

Your mother wants room for a postscript, so my lecture must conclude abruptly. Yours.

LETTER CLXXXI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear friend,

It is hard upon us striplings, who have uncles still living (N. B. I myself have an uncle still alive), that those venerable gentlemen should stand in our way, even when the ladies are in question; that I, for instance, should find in one page of your letter, a hope that Miss Shuttleworth would be of your party, and be told in your next, that she is engaged to your uncle. Well, we may perhaps never be uncles; but we may reasonably hope that the time is coming, when others, as young as we are now, shall envy us the privileges of old age, and see us engross that share in the attention of the ladies, to which their youth must aspire in vain. Make our compliments, if you please, to your sister Eliza, and tell her that we are both mortified at having missed the pleasure of seeing her.

Balloons are so much the mode, that even in this country we have attempted a balloon. You may possibly remember that, at a place called Weston, a little more than a mile from Olney, there lives a family whose name is Throckmorton. The present possessor is a young man, whom I remember a boy. He has a wife, who is young, genteel, and handsome. They are Papists, but much more amiable than many Protestants. We never had any intercourse with the family, though ever since we lived here we have enjoyed the range of their pleasure-grounds, having been favoured with a key, which admits us into all. When this man succeeded to the estate, on the death of his elder brother, and came to settle at Weston, I sent him a complimentary card, requesting the continuance of that privilege, having till then enjoyed it by favour of his mother, who on that occasion went to finish her days at Bath. You may conclude that he granted it, and for about two years nothing more passed between us. A fortnight ago, I received an invitation in the civilest terms, in which he told me, that the next day he should attempt to fill a balloon, and, if it would be any pleasure to me to be present, should be happy to see me. Your mother and I went. The whole country were there, but the balloon could not be filled. The endeavour

was, I believe, very philosophically made; but such a process depends for its success upon such niceties as make it very precarious. Our reception was however flattering to a great degree; inasmuch that more notice seemed to be taken of us, than we could possibly have expected, indeed rather more than any of his other guests. They even seemed anxious to recommend themselves to our regards. We drank chocolate, and were asked to dine, but were engaged. A day or two afterwards, Mrs. Unwin and I walked that way, and were overtaken in a shower. I found a tree, that I thought would shelter us both, a large elm, in a grove that fronts the mansion. Mrs. T. observed us, and running towards us in the rain, insisted on our walking in. He was gone out. We sat chatting with her till the weather cleared up, and then at her instance took a walk with her in the garden. The garden is almost their only walk, and is certainly the only retreat in which they are not liable to interruption. She offered us a key of it, in a manner that made it impossible not to accept it, and said she would send us one. A few days afterwards, in the cool of the evening, we walked that way again; we saw them going toward the house, and exchanged bows and curtsies at a distance, but did not join them. In a few minutes, when we had passed the house, and had almost reached the gate that opens out of the park into the adjoining field, I heard the iron gate belonging to the court-yard ring, and saw Mr. T. advancing hastily toward us: we made equal haste to meet him; he presented to us the key, which I told him I esteemed a singular favour; and after a few such speeches as are made on such occasions, we parted. This happened about a week ago. I concluded nothing less than that all this civility and attention was designed on their part as a prelude to a nearer acquaintance; but here at present the matter rests. I should like exceedingly to be on an easy footing there, to give a morning call now and then, and to receive one, but nothing more. For though he is one of the most agreeable men I ever saw, I could not wish to visit him in any other way; neither our house, furniture, servants, or income, being such as qualify us to make entertainments; neither would I on any account be introduced to the

neighbouring gentry. Mr. T. is altogether a man of fashion, and respectable on every account.

I have told you a long story. Farewell. We number the days as they pass, and are glad that we shall see you and your sister soon. Yours, &c.

LETTER CLXXXII.

To the same.

Jan. 3, 1784.

My dear William,

Your silence began to be distressing to both your mother and me; and had I not received a letter from you last night, I should have written by this post to inquire after your health. How can it be, that you, who are not stationary like me, but often change your situation, and mix with a variety of company, should suppose me furnished with such abundant materials, and yourself destitute. I assure you faithfully, that I do not find the soil of Olney prolific in the growth of such articles as make letter-writing a desirable employment. No place contributes less to the catalogue of incidents, or is more scantily supplied with anecdotes worth notice.

We have

One parson, one poet, one belman, one crier,
And the poor poet is our only 'squire.

Guess then if I have not more reason to expect two letters from you, than you one from me. The principal occurrence, and that which affects me most at present, came to pass this moment. The stair-foot door, being swelled by the thaw, would do any thing better than it would open. An attempt to force it upon that office has been attended with such a horrible dissolution of its parts, that we were immediately obliged to introduce a chisurgeon, commonly called a carpenter, whose applications we have some hope will cure it of a lock'd jaw, and heal its numerous fractures. His medicines are powerful chalybeates, and a certain glutinous salve, which he tells me is made of the tails and ears of animals. The consequences, however, are rather unfavourable to my present employment, which does not well brook noise, bustle, and interruption.

This being the case, I shall not, perhaps, be either so perspicuous or so diffuse on the subject of which you desire my sentiments, as I should be; but I will do my best. Know then, that I have learnt long since, of Abbé Raynal, to hate all monopolies, as injurious, howsoever managed, to the interests of commerce at large; consequently the charter in question would not, at any rate, be a favourite of mine. This, however, is of itself, I confess, no sufficient reason to justify the resumption of it. But such reasons I think are not wanting. A grant of that kind, it is well known, is always forfeited by the non-performance of the conditions. And why not equally forfeited if those conditions are exceeded; if the design of it be perverted, and its operation extended to objects which were never in the contemplation of the donor? This appears to me to be no misrepresentation of their case, whose charter is supposed to be in danger. It constitutes them a trading company, and gives them an exclusive right to traffic in the East Indies. But it does no more. It invests them with no sovereignty; it does not convey to them the royal prerogative of making war and peace, which the king cannot alienate, if he would. But this prerogative they have exercised; and, forgetting the terms of their institution, have possessed themselves of an immense territory, which they have ruled with a rod of iron, to which it is impossible they should even have a right, unless such a one as it is a disgrace to plead—the right of conquest. The potentates of this country they dash in pieces like a potter's vessel, as often as they please, making the happiness of thirty millions of mankind a consideration subordinate to that of their own emolument, oppressing them as often as it may serve a lucrative purpose, and in no instance, that I have ever heard, consulting their interest or advantage. That government, therefore, is bound to interfere, and to un-king these tyrants, is to me self-evident. And if, having subjugated so much of this miserable world, it is therefore necessary that we must keep possession of it, it appears to me a duty so binding on the legislature to resume it from the hands of those usurpers, that I should think a curse, and a bitter one, must follow the neglect of it. But suppose this were

done, can they be legally deprived of their charter? In truth I think so. If the abuse and perversion of a charter can amount to a defeasance of it, never were they so grossly palpable as in this instance; never was charter so justly forfeited. Neither am I at all afraid that such a measure should be drawn into a precedent; unless it could be alleged, as a sufficient reason for not having a rogue, that perhaps magistracy might grow wanton in the exercise of such a power, and now and then hang up an honest man for its amusement. When the governors of the Bank shall have deserved the same severity, I hope they will meet with it. In the mean time I do not think them a whit more in jeopardy because a corporation of plunderers have been brought to justice.

We are well, and love you all. I never wrote in such a hurry, nor in such a disturbance. Pardon the effects, and believe me yours affectionately.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Jan. 8, 1784.

My dear William,
WHEN I first resolved to write an answer to your last this evening, I had no thought of any thing more sublime than prose. But, before I began, it occurred to me, that perhaps you would not be displeased with an attempt to give a poetical translation of the lines you sent me. They are so beautiful, that I felt the temptation irresistible. At least, as the French say, it was *plus forte que moi*; and I accordingly complied. By this means I have lost an hour; and whether I shall be able to fill my sheet before supper, is as yet doubtful. But I will do my best.

For your remarks, I think them perfectly just. You have no reason to distrust your taste, or to submit the trial of it to me. You understand the use and the force of language as well as any man. You have quick feeling, and you are fond of poetry. How is it possible then that you should not be a judge of it? I venture to hazard only one alteration, which, as it appears to me, would amount to a little improvement. The seventh and

eighth lines, I think, I should like better thus—

*Aspirante levi zephyro et redeunte serenâ
Anni temperie secundo è cespit surgunt.*

My reason is, that the word *cum* is repeated too soon. At least my ear does not like it; and when it can be done without injury to the sense, there seems to me to be an elegance in diversifying the expression as much as possible upon similar occasions. It discovers a command of phrase, and gives a more masterly air to the piece. If *extincta* stood unconnected with *telis*, I should prefer your word *micant*, to the Doctor's *vigent*. But the latter seems to stand more in direct opposition to that sort of extinction, which is effected by a shaft or arrow. In the day-time the stars may be said to die, and in the night to recover their strength. Perhaps the Doctor had in his eye that noble line of Gray's—

“Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring
shafts of war!”

But it is a beautiful composition. It is tender, touching, and elegant. It is not easy to do it justice in English.

Many thanks for the books, [which, being most admirably packed, came safe. They will furnish us with many a winter evening's amusement. We are glad that you intend to be the carrier back.

We rejoice too that your cousin has remembered you in her will. The money she left to those who attended her hearse would have been better bestowed upon you; and by this time perhaps she thinks so. Alas! what an enquiry does that thought suggest, and how impossible to make it to any purpose! What are the employments of the departed spirit? and where does it subsist? Has it any cognizance of earthly things? Is it transported to an immeasurable distance; or is it still, though imperceptible to us, conversant with the same scene, and interested in what passes here! How little we know of a state to which we are all destined; and how does the obscurity, that hangs over that undiscovered country, increase the anxiety we sometimes feel as we are journeying towards it! It is sufficient, however, for such as you, and a few more of my acquaintance, to know, that in your separate state you will be happy. Provision is made for your reception; and you will have no

cause to regret aught that you have left behind.

I have written to Mr. ——. My letter went this morning. How I love and honour that man! For many reasons I dare not tell him how much. But I hate the frigidity of the style in which I am forced to address him. That line of Horace—

"Dū tibi divitias dederunt artemque fruendi"—

was never so applicable to the poet's friend as to Mr. ——. My bosom burns to immortalize him. But prudence says, "Forbear!" and, though a poet, I pay respect to her injunctions.

I sincerely give you joy of the good you have unconsciously done, by your example and conversation. That you seem to yourself not to deserve the acknowledgment your friend makes of it, is a proof that you do. Grace is blind to its own beauty; whereas such virtues, as men may reach without it, are remarkable self-admirers. May you make such impressions upon many of your order! I know none that need them more.

You do not want my praises of your conduct towards Mr. ——. It is well for him, however, and still better for yourself, that you are capable of such a part. It was said of some good man (my memory does not serve me with his name), "Do him an ill-turn, and you make him your friend for ever." But it is Christianity only that forms such friends. I wish his father may be duly affected by this instance and proof of your superiority to those ideas of you, which he has so unreasonably harboured. He is not in my favour now, nor will he upon any other terms.

I laughed at the comments you make on your own feelings, when the subject of them was a newspaper eulogium. But it was a laugh of pleasure and approbation: such indeed is the heart, and so is it made up. There are few that can do good, and keep their own secret; none, perhaps, without a struggle. Yourself, and your friend —, are no very common instances of the fortitude that is necessary in such a conflict. In former days I have felt my heart beat, and every vein throb upon such an occasion. To publish my own deed was wrong. I knew it to be so. But to conceal it seemed like a voluntary injury to myself.

Sometimes I could and sometimes I could not succeed. My occasions for such conflicts, indeed, were not very numerous. Yours.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Feb. 10, 1784.

My dear friend,

THE morning is my writing time, and in the morning I have no spirits. So much the worse for my correspondents. Sleep, that refreshes my body, seems to cripple me in every other respect. As the evening approaches, I grow more alert; and, when I am retiring to bed, am more fit for mental occupation than at any other time. So it fares with us, whom they call nervous. By a strange inversion of the animal economy, we are ready to sleep when we have most need to be awake, and go to bed just when we might sit up to some purpose. The watch is irregularly wound up; it goes in the night, when it is not wanted, and in the day stands still. In many respects we have the advantage of our forefathers the Picts. We sleep in a whole skin, and are not obliged to submit to the painful operation of punctuating ourselves from head to foot, in order that we may be decently dressed and fit to appear abroad. But, on the other hand, we have reason enough to envy them their tone of nerves, and that flow of spirits, which effectually secured them from all uncomfortable impressions of a gloomy atmosphere, and from every shade of melancholy from every other cause. They understood, I suppose, the use of vulnerary herbs, having frequent occasion for some skill in surgery; but physicians, I presume, they had none, having no need of any. Is it possible, that a creature like myself can be descended from such progenitors, in whom there appears not a single trace of family resemblance? What an alteration have a few ages made! They, without clothing, would defy the severest season; and I, with all the accommodations that art has since invented, am hardly secure even in the mildest. If the wind blows upon me when my pores are open, I catch cold. A cough is the consequence. I suppose, if such a disorder could have seized a Pict, his friends would have

concluded that a bone had stuck in his throat, and that he was in some danger of choking. They would, perhaps, have addressed themselves to the cure of his cough by thrusting their fingers into his gullet, which would only have exasperated the case. But they would never have thought of administering laudanum, my only remedy. For this difference, however, that has obtained between me and my ancestors, I am indebted to the luxurious practices and enfeebling self-indulgence of a long line of grandsires, who, from generation to generation, have been employed in deteriorating the breed ; till at last the collected effects of all their follies have centred in my puny self : a man, indeed, but not in the image of those that went before me : a man who sigh and groan, who wear out life in dejection and oppression of spirits, and who never think of the aborigines of the country to which I belong, without wishing that I had been born among them. The evil is without a remedy, unless the ages that are passed could be recalled, my whole pedigree be permitted to live again, and, being properly admonished to beware of enervating sloth and refinement, would preserve their hardiness of nature unimpaired, and transmit the desirable quality to their posterity. I once saw Adam in a dream. We sometimes say of a picture, that we doubt not its likeness to the original, though we never saw him ; a judgment we have some reason to form, when the face is strongly charactered, and the features full of expression. So I think of my visionary Adam, and for a similar reason. His figure was awkward, indeed, in the extreme. It was evident, that he had never been taught by a Frenchman to hold his head erect, or to turn out his toes ; to dispose gracefully of his arms, or to simper without a meaning. But if Mr. Bacon was called upon to produce a statue of Hercules, he need not wish for a juster pattern. He stood like a rock ; the size of his limbs, the prominence of his muscles, and the height of his stature, all conspired to bespeak him a creature, whose strength had suffered no diminution, and who, being the first of his race, did not come into the world under a necessity of sustaining a load of infirmities, derived to him from the intemperance of others. He was as much stouter than a Pict, as I suppose a Pict to

have been than I. Upon my hypothesis, therefore, there has been a gradual declension, in point of bodily vigour, from Adam down to me ; at least if my dream were a just representation of that gentleman, and deserve the credit I cannot help giving it, such must have been the case. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXXXV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Olney, March 11, 1784.

I RETURN you many thanks for your Apology, which I have read with great pleasure. You know of old that your style always pleases me ; and having, in a former letter, given you the reasons for which I like it, I spare you now the pain of a repetition. The spirit, too, in which you write, pleases me as much. But I perceive that, in some cases, it is possible to be severe, and, at the same time, perfectly good-tempered ; in all cases, I suppose, where we suffer by an injurious and unreasonable attack, and can justify our conduct by a plain and simple narrative. On such occasions, truth itself seems a satire, because by implication, at least, it convicts our adversaries of the want of charity and candour. For this reason, perhaps, you will find, that you have made many angry, though you are not so ; and it is possible, they may be the more angry upon that very account. To assert, and to prove, that an enlightened minister of the Gospel may, without any violation of his conscience, and even upon the ground of prudence and propriety, continue in the Establishment ; and to do this with the most absolute composure, must be very provoking to the dignity of some dissenting doctors ; and, to nettle them still the more, you in a manner impose upon them the necessity of being silent, by declaring, that you will be so yourself. Upon the whole, however, I have no doubt that your Apology will do good. If it should irritate some, who have more zeal than knowledge, and more of bigotry than of either, it may serve to enlarge the views of others, and to convince them that there may be grace, truth, and efficacy, in the ministry of a church, of which they are not members. I wish it success, and all that attention to which, both from the

nature of the subject and the manner in which you have treated it, it is so well entitled.

The patronage of the East Indies will be a dangerous weapon, in whatever hands. I have no prospect of a deliverance for this country, but the same that I have of a possibility that we may one day be disencumbered of our ruinous possessions in the East.

Our good neighbours, who have so successfully knocked away our Western crutch from under us, seem to design us the same favour on the opposite side, in which case we shall be poor, but I think we shall stand a better chance to be free; and I had rather drink water-gruel for breakfast, and be no man's slave, than wear a chain, and drink tea as usual.

I have just room to add, that we love you as usual, and are your affectionate William and Mary.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

To the same.

March 19, 1784.

My dear friend,
I wish it were in my power to give you any account of the marquis Caraccioli. Some years since I saw a short history of him in the Review, of which I recollect no particulars, except that he was (and, for aught I know, may be still) an officer in the Prussian service. I have two volumes of his works lent me by lady Austen. One is upon the subject of self-acquaintance, and the other treats of the art of conversing with the same gentleman. Had I pursued my purpose of translating him, my design was to have furnished myself, if possible, with some authentic account of him, which I suppose may be procured at any bookseller's who deals in foreign publications. But, for the reasons given in my last, I have laid aside the design. There is something in his style that touches me exceedingly, and which I do not know how to describe. I should call it pathetic, if it were occasional only, and never occurred but when his subject happened to be particularly affecting. But it is universal; he has not a sentence that is not marked with it. Perhaps, therefore, I may describe it better by saying, that his whole work has an air of

pious and tender melancholy, which, to me, at least, is extremely agreeable. This property of it, which depends, perhaps, altogether upon the arrangement of his words, and the modulation of his sentences, it would be very difficult to preserve in a translation. I do not know that our language is capable of being so managed, and rather suspect that it is not, and that it is peculiar to the French, because it is not unfrequent among their writers, and I never saw any thing similar to it in our own.

My evenings are devoted to books. I read aloud for the entertainment of the party, thus making amends, by a vociferation of two hours, for my silence at other times. We are in good health, and waiting as patiently as we can for the end of this second winter. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

April 5, 1784.

My dear William,
I THANKED you, in my last, for Johnson, I now thank you, with more emphasis, for Beattie, the most agreeable and amiable writer I ever met with: the only author I have seen, whose critical and philosophical researches are diversified and embellished by a poetical imagination, that makes even the driest subject, and the leanest, a feast for an epicure in books. He is so much at his ease too, that his own character appears in every page; and, which is very rare, we see not only the writer, but the man; and that man so gentle, so well tempered, so happy in his religion, and so humane in his philosophy, that it is necessary to love him if one has any sense of what is lovely. If you have not his poem called the Minstrel, and cannot borrow it, I must beg you to buy it for me; for though I cannot afford to deal largely in so expensive a commodity as books, I must afford to purchase at least the poetical works of Beattie. I have read six of Blair's Lectures,—and what do I say of Blair? That he is a sensible man, master of his subject, and, excepting here and there a Scotticism, a good writer, so far at least as perspicuity of expression and method contribute to make one.

But oh the sterility of that man's fancy ! if indeed he has any such faculty belonging to him. Perhaps philosophers, or men designed for such, are sometimes born without one ; or perhaps it withers for want of exercise. However that may be, doctor Blair has such a brain as Shakspeare somewhere describes—"dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage."

I take it for granted, that these good men are philosophically correct (for they are both agreed upon the subject) in their account of the origin of language ; and if the Scripture had left us in the dark upon that article, I should very readily adopt their hypothesis, for want of better information. I should suppose, for instance, that man made his first effort in speech in the way of an interjection, and that ah, or oh, being uttered with wonderful gesticulation and variety of attitude, must have left his powers of expression quite exhausted ; that in a course of time he would invent many names for many things, but first for the objects of his daily wants. An apple would consequently be called an apple, and perhaps not many years would elapse before the appellation would receive the sanction of general use. In this case, and upon this supposition, seeing one in the hand of another man, he would exclaim with a most moving pathos, "Oh apple !"—Well and good—oh apple ! is a very affecting speech, but in the mean time it profits him nothing. The man that holds it, eats it, and he goes away with Oh apple ! in his mouth, and with nothing better. Reflecting on his disappointment, and that perhaps it arose from his not being more explicit, he contrives a term to denote his idea of transfer or gratuitous communication, and the next occasion that offers, of a similar kind, performs his part accordingly. His speech now stands thus, "Oh give apple." The apple-holder perceives himself called upon to part with his fruit, and, having satisfied his own hunger, is perhaps not unwilling to do so. But unfortunately there is still room for a mistake ; and a third person being present, he gives the apple to him. Again disappointed, and again perceiving that his language has not all the precision that is requisite, the orator retires to his study ; and there, after much deep thinking, conceives that the insertion of

a pronoun, whose office shall be to signify, that he not only wants the apple to be given, but given to himself, will remedy all defects : he uses it the next opportunity, and succeeds to a wonder, obtains the apple, and, by his success, such credit to his invention, that pronouns continue to be in great repute ever after.

Now as my two syllable-mongers, Beattie and Blair, both agree that language was originally inspired, and that the great variety of languages we find upon earth at present took its rise from the confusion of tongues at Babel, I am not perfectly convinced that there is any just occasion to invent this very ingenious solution of a difficulty, which Scripture has solved already. My opinion however is, if I may presume to have an opinion of my own so different from theirs, who are so much wiser than myself, that if man had been his own teacher, and had acquired his words and his phrases only as necessity or convenience had prompted, his progress must have been considerably slower than it was, and in Homer's days the production of such a poem as the Iliad impossible. On the contrary, I doubt not Adam, on the very day of his creation, was able to express himself in terms both forcible and elegant, and that he was at no loss for sublime diction and logical combination, when he wanted to praise his Maker. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

April 25, 1784.

My dear William,
I wish I had both burning words and bright thoughts. But I have at present neither. My head is not itself. Having had an unpleasant night, and a melancholy day, and having already written a long letter, I do not find myself, in point of spirits, at all qualified either to burn or shine. The post sets out early on Tuesday. The morning is the only time of exercise with me. In order, therefore, to keep it open for that purpose, and to comply with your desire of an immediate answer, I give you as much as I can spare of the present evening.

Since I dispatched my last, Blair has crept a little farther into my favour. As his subjects improve, he improves with them; but upon the whole I account him a dry writer, useful no doubt as an instructor, but as little entertaining as, with so much knowledge, it is possible to be. His language is (except Swift's) the least figurative I remember to have seen, and the few figures found in it are not always happily employed. I take him to be a critic very little animated by what he reads, who rather reasons about the beauties of an author than really tastes them, and who finds that a passage is praise-worthy, not because it charms him, but because it is accommodated to the laws of criticism, in that case made and provided. I have a little complied with your desire of marginal annotations, and should have dealt in them more largely, had I read the books to myself; but, being reader to the ladies, I have not always time to settle my own opinion of a doubtful expression, much less to suggest an emendation. I have not censured a particular observation in the book, though, when I met with it, it displeased me. I this moment recollect it, and may as well therefore note it here. He is commending, and deservedly, that most noble description of a thunder storm in the first Georgic, which ends with

Ingeminant austri et densissimus imber.

Being in haste, I do not refer to the volume for his very words, but my memory will serve me with the matter. When poets describe, he says, they should always select such circumstances of the subject as are least obvious, and therefore most striking. He therefore admires the effects of the thunderbolt splitting mountains, and filling a nation with astonishment; but quarrels with the closing member of the period, as containing particulars of a storm not worthy of Virgil's notice, because obvious to the notice of all. But here I differ from him; not being able to conceive that wind and rain can be improper in the description of a tempest, or how wind and rain could possibly be more poetically described. Virgil is indeed remarkable for finishing his periods well, and never comes to a stop but with the most consummate dignity of numbers and expression; and in the instance in question, I think, his skill in this re-

spect is remarkably displayed. The line is perfectly majestic in its march. As to the wind, it is such only as the word *ingeminant* could describe; and the words *densissimus imber* give one an idea of a shower indeed, but of such a shower as is not very common, and such a one as only Virgil could have done justice to by a single epithet. Far therefore from agreeing with the Doctor in his stricture, I do not think the *Æneid* contains a nobler line, or a description more magnificently finished.

We are glad that Dr. C—— has singled you out upon this occasion. Your performance we doubt not will justify his choice: fear not—you have a heart that can feel upon charitable occasions, and therefore will not fail you upon this. The burning words will come fast enough when the sensibility is such as yours. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

May 8, 1784.

My dear friend,
You do well to make your letters merry ones, though not very merry yourself, and that both for my sake and your own; for your own sake, because it sometimes happens, that, by assuming an air of cheerfulness, we become cheerful in reality; and for mine, because I have always more need of a laugh than a cry; being somewhat disposed to melancholy by natural temperament as well as by other causes.

It was long since, and even in the infancy of John Gilpin, recommended to me by a lady now at Bristol, to write a sequel. But having always observed, that authors, elated with the success of a first part, have fallen below themselves when they have attempted a second, I had more prudence than to take her counsel. I want you to read the history of that hero, published by Bladon, and to tell me what it is made of. But buy it not. For, puffed as it is in the papers, it can be but a bookseller's job, and must be dear at the price of two shillings. In the last packet but one that I received from Johnson, he asked me if I had any improvements of John Gilpin in hand, or if I designed any; for that to print only the

original again, would be to publish what has been hackneyed in every magazine, in every newspaper, and in every street. I answered, that the copy which I sent him contained two or three small variations from the first, except which I had none to propose; and if he thought him now too trite to make a part of my volume, I should willingly acquiesce in his judgment. I take it for granted, therefore, that he will not bring up the rear of my poems according to my first intention, and shall not be sorry for the omission. It may spring from a principle of pride; but spring from what it may, I feel, and have long felt, a disinclination to a public avowal that he is mine; and since he became so popular, I have felt it more than ever; not that I should have expressed a scruple, if Johnson had not. But a fear has suggested itself to me, that I might expose myself to a charge of vanity by admitting him into my book, and that some people would impute it to me as a crime. Consider what the world is made of, and you will not find my suspicions chimerical. Add to this, that when, on correcting the latter part of the fifth book of the *Task*, I came to consider the solemnity and sacred nature of the subjects there handled, it seemed to me an incongruity at the least, not to call it by a harsher name, to follow up such premises with such a conclusion. I am well content therefore with having laughed and made others laugh, and will build my hopes of success, as a poet, upon more important matter.

In our printing business we now jog on merrily enough. The coming week will, I hope, bring me to an end of the *Task*, and the next fortnight to an end of the whole. I am glad to have Paley on my side in the affair of education. He is certainly on all subjects a sensible man, and on such, a wise one. But I am mistaken if *Tirocinium* do not make some of my friends angry, and procure me enemies not a few. There is a sting in verse, that prose neither has nor can have; and I do not know that schools in the gross, and especially public schools, have ever been so pointedly condemned before. But they are become a nuisance, a pest, an abomination; and it is fit that the eyes and noses of mankind should, if possible, be opened to perceive it.

This is indeed an author's letter; but

it is an author's letter to his friend. If you will be the friend of an author, you must expect such letters. Come July, and come yourself, with as many of your exterior selves as can possibly come with you!

Yours, my dear William, affectionately, and with your mother's remembrances. Adieu.

LETTER CXC.

To the Rev. John Newton.

July 5, 1764.

My dear friend,

A DEARTH of materials, a consciousness that my subjects are, for the most part, and must be uninteresting and unimportant; but, above all, a poverty of animal spirits, that makes writing much a great fatigue to me, have occasioned my choice of smaller paper. Acquiesce in the justness of these reasons for the present; and if ever the times should mend with me, I sincerely promise to amend with them.

Homer says on a certain occasion, that Jupiter, when he was wanted at home, was gone to partake of an entertainment provided for him by the *Æthiopians*. If by Jupiter we understand the weather, or the season, as the ancients frequently did, we may say, that our English Jupiter has been absent on account of some such invitation: during the whole month of June he left us to experience almost the rigours of winter. This fine day, however, affords us some hope that the feast is ended, and that we shall enjoy his company without the interference of his Ethiopian friends again.

Is it possible, that the wise men of antiquity could entertain a real reverence for the fabulous rubbish which they dignified with the name of religion? We, who have been favoured from our infancy with so clear a light, are perhaps hardly competent to decide the question, and may strive in vain to imagine the absurdities, that even a good understanding may receive as truths, when totally unaided by revelation. It seems, however, that men, whose conceptions upon other subjects were often sublime, whose reasoning powers were undoubtedly equal to our own, and whose management in matters of jurisprudence, that required

a very industrious examination of evidence, was as acute and subtle as that of a modern attorney general, could not be the dupes of such imposture, as a child among us would detect and laugh at. Juvenal, I remember, introduces one of his satires with an observation, that there were some in his day who had the hardiness to laugh at the stories of Tartarus and Styx and Charon, and of the frogs that croak upon the banks of Lethe, giving his reader, at the same time, cause to suspect, that he was himself one of that profane number. Horace, on the other hand, declares in sober sadness, that he would not for all the world get into a boat with a man who had divulged the Eleusinian mysteries. Yet we know, that those mysteries, whatever they might be, were altogether as unworthy to be esteemed divine, as the mythology of the vulgar. How then must we determine? If Horace were a good and orthodox heathen, how came Juvenal to be such an ungracious libertine in principle, as to ridicule the doctrines which the other held as sacred? Their opportunities of information and their mental advantages were equal. I feel myself rather inclined to believe, that Juvenal's avowed infidelity was sincere, and that Horace was no better than a canting hypocritical professor.

You must grant me a dispensation for saying any thing, whether it be sense or nonsense, upon the subject of politics. It is truly a matter in which I am so little interested, that were it not that it sometimes serves me for a theme, when I can find no other, I should never mention it. I would forfeit a large sum, if after advertising a month in the Gazette, the minister of the day, whoever he may be, could discover a man that cares about him, or his measures, so little as I do. When I say that I would forfeit a large sum, I mean to have it understood, that I would forfeit such a sum if I had it. If Mr. Pitt be indeed a virtuous man, as such I respect him. But at the best, I fear that he will have to say at last with Hector,

*Si Pergama dextra
Defendi possent, etiàm hæc defensa fuissent.*

Be he what he may, I do not like his taxes. At least I am much disposed to quarrel with some of them. The additional duty upon candles, by which the

poor will be much affected, hurts me most. He says, indeed, that they will but little feel it, because even now they can hardly afford the use of them. He had certainly put no compassion into his budget, when he produced from it this tax, and such an argument to support it. Justly translated, it seems to amount to this—"Make the necessaries of life too expensive for the poor to reach them, and you will save their money. If they buy but few candles, they will pay but little tax; and if they buy none, the tax, as to them, will be annihilated." True. But, in the mean time, they will break their shins against their furniture, if they have any, and will be but little the richer, when the hours, in which they might work, if they could see, shall be deducted.

I have bought a great dictionary, and want nothing but Latin authors, to furnish me with the use of it. Had I purchased them first, I had begun at the right end. But I could not afford it. I beseech you admire my prudence.

Vivite, valete, et mementote nostrum.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER CXCI.

From the same to the same.

July 28, 1784.

My dear friend,
I MAY perhaps be short, but am not willing that you should go to Lymington without first having had a line from me. I know that place well, having spent six weeks there, above twenty years ago. The town is neat, and the country delightful. You walk well, and will consequently find a part of the coast, called Hall Cliff, within the reach of your ten toes. It was a favourite walk of mine; to the best of my remembrance, about three miles distant from Lymington. There you may stand upon the beach, and contemplate the Needle-rock. At least you might have done so twenty years ago. But since that time, I think, it is fallen from its base, and is drowned, and is no longer a visible object of contemplation. I wish you may pass your time there happily, as in all probability you will; perhaps usefully too to others, undoubtedly so to yourself.

The manner in which you have been previously made acquainted with Mr. Gilpin, gives a providential air to your journey, and affords reason to hope, that you may be charged with a message to him. I admire him as a biographer. But as Mrs. Unwin and I were talking of him last night, we could not but wonder, that a man should see so much excellence in the lives, and so much glory and beauty in the death of the martyrs whom he has recorded, and at the same time disapprove the principles that produced the very conduct he admired. It seems however a step towards the truth to applaud the fruits of it; and one cannot help thinking, that one step more would put him in possession of the truth itself. By your means may he be enabled to take it!

We are obliged to you for the preference you would have given to Olney, had not Providence determined your course another way. But as when we saw you last summer, you gave us no reason to expect you this, we are the less disappointed. At your age and mine, biennial visits have such a gap between them, that we cannot promise ourselves upon those terms very numerous future interviews. But, whether ours are to be many or few, you will always be welcome to me, for the sake of the comfortable days that are past. In my present state of mind, my friendship for you indeed is as warm as ever. But I feel myself very indifferently qualified to be your companion. Other days than these inglorious and unprofitable ones, are promised me; and when I see them I shall rejoice.

I saw the advertisement of your adversary's book. He is happy at least in this, that, whether he have brains or none, he strikes without the danger of being stricken again. He could not wish to engage in a controversy upon easier terms. The other, whose publication is postponed till Christmas, is resolved, I suppose, to do something. But do what he will, he cannot prove that you have not been aspersed, or that you have not refuted the charge; which, unless he can do, I think he will do little to the purpose.

Mrs. Unwin thinks of you, and always with a grateful recollection of yours and Mrs. Newton's kindness. She has had a nervous fever lately: but

I hope she is better. The weather forbids walking, a prohibition hurtful to us both.

We heartily wish you a good journey, and are affectionately yours.

LETTER CXCII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 14, 1784.

My dear friend,
I GIVE you joy of a journey performed without trouble or danger. You have travelled five hundred miles without having encountered either. Some neighbours of ours, about a fortnight since, made an excursion only to a neighbouring village, and brought home with them fractured skulls and broken limbs, and one of them is dead. For my own part, I seem pretty much exempted from the dangers of the road. Thanks to that tender interest and concern, which the legislature takes in my security! Having no doubt their fears too so precious a life should determine too soon, and by some untimely stroke of misadventure, they have made wheels and horses so expensive, that I am not likely to owe my death to either.

Your mother and I continue to visit Weston daily, and find in those agreeable bowers such amusement, as leaves us but little room to regret that we can go no farther. Having touched that theme, I cannot abstain from the pleasure of telling you, that our neighbours in that place, being about to leave it for some time, and meeting us there but a few evenings before their departure, entreated us, during their absence, to consider the garden, and all its contents, as our own, and to gather whatever we liked, without the least scruple. We accordingly picked strawberries as often as we went, and brought home as many bundles of honeysuckles as served to perfume our dwelling till they returned.

Once more, by the aid of lord Dartmouth, I find myself a voyager in the Pacific Ocean. In our last night's lecture we made our acquaintance with the island of Hapae, where we had never been before. The French and Italians, it seems, have but little cause to plume

themselves on account of their achievements in the dancing way; and we may hereafter, without much repining at it, acknowledge their superiority in that art. They are equalled, perhaps excelled, by savages. How wonderful, that without any intercourse with a politer world, and having made no proficiency in any other accomplishment, they should in this, however, have made themselves such adepts, that for regularity and grace of motion they might even be our masters! How wonderful too, that with a tub, and a stick, they should be able to produce such harmony, as persons accustomed to the sweetest music, cannot but hear with pleasure! Is it not very difficult to account for the striking difference of character that obtains among the inhabitants of these islands? Many of them are near neighbours to each other; their opportunities of improvement much the same; yet some of them are in a degree polite; discover symptoms of taste, and have a sense of elegance; while others are as rude as we naturally expect to find a people, who have never had any communication with the northern hemisphere. These volumes furnish much matter of philosophical speculation, and often entertain me, even while I am not employed in reading them.

I am sorry you have not been able to ascertain the doubtful intelligence I have received on the subject of cork skirts and bosoms. I am now every day occupied in giving all the grace I can to my new production, and in transcribing it; I shall soon arrive at the passage that censures that folly, which I shall be loth to expunge, but which I must not spare, unless the criminals can be convicted. The world, however, is not so unproductive of subjects of censure, but that it may probably supply me with some other that may serve as well.

If you know any body that is writing, or intends to write, an epic poem on the new regulation of *franks*, you may give him my compliments, and these two lines for a beginning—

Heu quot amatores nunc torquet epistola rara!
Vectigal certum, perituraque gratia FRANKI!

Yours faithfully.

LETTER CXCIH.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Aug. 16, 1784.

My dear friend,
Had you not expressed a desire to hear from me before you take leave of Lymington, I certainly should not have answered you so soon. Knowing the place, and the amusements it affords, I should have had more modesty than to suppose myself capable of adding any thing to your present entertainments worthy to rank with them. I am not, however, totally destitute of such pleasures as an inland country may pretend to. If my windows do not command a view of the ocean, at least they look out upon, a profusion of mignonette; which, if it be not so grand an object, is, however, quite as fragrant: and if I have not an hermit in a grotto, I have nevertheless myself in a green house, a less venerable figure perhaps, but not at all less animated than he: nor are we in this nook altogether unfurnished with such means of philosophical experiment and speculation, as at present the world rings with. On Thursday morning last, we sent up a balloon from Emberton meadow. Thrice it rose, and as oft descended; and in the evening it performed another flight at Newport, where it went up, and came down no more. Like the arrow discharged at the pigeon in the Trojan games, it kindled in the air, and was consumed in a moment. I have not heard what interpretation the soothsayers have given to the omen, but shall wonder a little if the Newton shepherd prognosticate any thing less from it than the most bloody war that was ever waged in Europe.

I am reading Cook's last voyage, and am much pleased and amused with it. It seems, that in some of the Friendly Isles they excel so much in dancing, and perform that operation with such exquisite delicacy and grace, that they are not surpassed even upon our European stages. Oh! that Vestris had been in the ship, that he might have seen himself outdone by a savage. The paper indeed tells us, that the queen of France has clapped this king of capers up in prison, for declining to dance before her, on a pretence of sickness, when in fact he was in perfect health. If this be true,

perhaps he may by this time be prepared to second such a wish as mine, and to think, that the durance he suffers would be well exchanged for a dance at Annamooka. I should, however, as little have expected to hear, that these islanders had such consummate skill in an art that requires so much taste in the conduct of the person, as that they were good mathematicians and astronomers. Defective, as they are, in every branch of knowledge, and in every other species of refinement, it seems wonderful that they should arrive at such perfection in the dance, which some of our English gentlemen, with all the assistance of French instruction, find it impossible to learn. We must conclude, therefore, that particular nations have a genius for particular feats, and that our neighbours in Franch, and our friends in the South Sea, have minds very nearly akin, though they inhabit countries so very remote from each other.

Mrs. Unwin remembers to have been in company with Mr. Gilpin at her brother's. She thought him very sensible and polite, and consequently very agreeable.

We are truly glad that Mrs. Newton and yourself are so well, and that there is reason to hope that Eliza is better. You will learn from this letter that we are so; and that, for my own part, I am not quite so low in spirits as at some times. Learn too, what you knew before, that we love you all, and that I am your affectionate friend.

LETTER CXIV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Sept. 18, 1784.

My dear friend,

FOLLOWING your good example, I lay before me a sheet of my largest paper. It was this moment fair and unblemished, but I have begun to blot it, and having begun, am not likely to cease till I have spoiled it. I have sent you many a sheet that, in my judgment of it, has been very unworthy of your acceptance; but my conscience was in some measure satisfied by reflecting, that if it were good for nothing, at the same time it cost you nothing, except the trouble of reading it. But the case is altered now. You

must pay a solid price for frothy matter; and though I do not absolutely pick your pocket, yet you lose your money, and, as the saying is, are never the wiser.

My green house is never so pleasant as when we are just upon the point of being turned out of it. The gentleness of the autumnal suns, and the calmness of this latter season, make it a much more agreeable retreat than we ever find it in the summer; when the winds being generally brisk, we cannot cool it by admitting a sufficient quantity of air, without being, at the same time, incommoded by it. But now I sit with all the windows and the door wide open, and am regaled with the scent of every flower, in a garden as full of flowers as I have known how to make it. We keep no bees; but if I lived in a hive, I should hardly hear more of their music. All the bees in the neighbourhood resort to a bed of mignonette opposite to the window, and pay me for the honey they get out of it by a hum, which, though rather monotonous, is as agreeable to my ear as the whistling of my linnets. All the sounds that Nature utters are delightful, at least in this country. I should not perhaps find the roaring of lions in Africa, or of bears in Russia, very pleasing; but I know no beast in England whose voice I do not account musical, save and except always the braying of an ass. The notes of all our birds and fowls please me, without one exception. I should not indeed think of keeping a goose in a cage, that I might hang him up in the parlour for the sake of his melody; but a goose upon a common, or in a farm yard, is no bad performer: and as to insects, if the black beetle, and beetles indeed of all hues, will keep out of my way, I have no objection to any of the rest; on the contrary, in whatever key they sing, from the gnat's fine treble, to the bass of the humble bee, I admire them all. Seriously, however, it strikes me as a very observable instance of providential kindness to man, that such an exact accord has been contrived between his ear, and the sounds with which, at least in a rural situation, it is almost every moment visited. All the world is sensible of the uncomfortable effect that certain sounds have upon the nerves, and consequently upon the spirits. And if a sinful world had been filled with such

as would have curdled the blood, and have made the sense of hearing a perpetual inconvenience, I do not know that we should have had a right to complain. But now the fields, the woods, the gardens, have each their concert; and the ear of man is for ever regaled, by creatures who seem only to please themselves. Even the ears that are deaf to the Gospel are continually entertained, though without knowing it, by sounds for which they are solely indebted to its Author. There is somewhere in infinite space a world that does not roll within the precincts of mercy: and as it is reasonable, and even scriptural, to suppose that there is music in heaven, in those dismal regions perhaps the reverse of it is found; tones so dismal, as to make woe itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair. But my paper admonishes me in good time to draw the reins, and to check the descent of my fancy into deeps, with which she is but too familiar.

Our best love attends you both, with yours.

LETTER CXCV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Oct. 2, 1784.

My dear William,

A POET can but ill spare time for prose. The truth is, I am in haste to finish my transcript, that you may receive it time enough to give it a leisurely reading before you go to town; which, whether I shall be able to accomplish, is at present uncertain. I have the whole punctuation to settle, which in blank verse is of the last importance, and of a species peculiar to that composition: for I know no use of points, unless to direct the voice; the management of which, in the reading of blank verse, being more difficult than in the reading of any other poetry, requires perpetual hints and notices, to regulate the inflections, cadences, and pauses. This, however, is an affair that, in spite of grammarians, must be left pretty much *ad libitum scriptoris*. For I suppose every author points according to his own reading. If I can send the parcel to the waggon by one o'clock next Wednesday, you will have it on Saturday the ninth. But this is more than I expect. Perhaps I shall not be

able to dispatch it till the eleventh, in which case it will not reach you till the thirteenth. I rather think that the latter of these two periods will obtain, because, besides the punctuation, I have the argument of each book to transcribe. Add to this, that in writing for the printer, I am forced to write my best, which makes slow work. The motto of the whole is—*Fit surculus arbor*. If you can put the author's name under it, do so—if not, it must go without one, for I know not to whom to ascribe it. It was a motto taken by a certain prince of Orange, in the year 1733; but not to a poem of his own writing, nor indeed to any poem at all, but, as I think, to a medal.

Mr. ——— is a Cornish member; but for what place in Cornwall I know not. All I know of him is, that I saw him once clap his two hands upon a rail, meaning to leap over it. But he did not think the attempt a safe one, and therefore took them off again. He was in company with Mr. Throckmorton. With that gentleman we drank chocolate, since I wrote last. The occasion of our visit was, as usual, a balloon. Your mother invited her, and I him, and they promised to return the visit, but have not yet performed. *Tout le monde se trouvoit là*, as you may suppose; among the rest, Mrs. W——. She was driven to the door by her son, a boy of seventeen, in a phaeton, drawn by four horses from Lilliput. This is an ambiguous expression; and, should what I write now be legible a thousand years hence, might puzzle commentators. Be it known therefore, to the Alduses and the Stevensens of ages yet to come, that I do not mean to affirm, that Mrs. W—— herself came from Lilliput that morning, or indeed that she ever was there, but merely to describe the horses, as being so diminutive, that they might be, with propriety, said to be Lilliputian.

The privilege of franking having been so cropped, I know not in what manner I and my bookseller are to settle the conveyance of proof sheets hither and back again. They must travel, I imagine, by coach, a large quantity of them at a time; for, like other authors, I find myself under a poetical necessity of being frugal.

We love you all, jointly and separately, as usual.

LETTER CXCVI.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Oct. 9, 1784.

My dear friend,

THE pains you have taken to disengage our correspondence from the expense with which it was threatened, convincing me that my letters, trivial as they are, are yet acceptable to you, encourage me to observe my usual punctuality. You complain of unconnected thoughts. I believe there is not a head in the world but might utter the same complaint; and that all would do so, were they all as attentive to their own vagaries, and as honest, as yours. The description of your meditations at least suits mine; perhaps I can go a step beyond you upon the same ground, and assert with the strictest truth, that I not only do not think with connection, but that I frequently do not think at all. I am much mistaken if I do not often catch myself napping in this way; for when I ask myself what was the last idea (as the ushers at Westminster ask an idle boy, what was the last word), I am not able to answer; but, like the boy in question, am obliged to stare, and say nothing. This may be a very unphilosophical account of myself, and may clash very much with the general opinion of the learned, that the soul, being an active principle, and her activity consisting in thought, she must consequently always think. But pardon me, *Messieurs les philosophes*, there are moments when, if I think at all, I am utterly unconscious of doing so; and the thought and the consciousness of it seem to me at least, who am no philosopher, to be inseparable from each other. Perhaps, however, we may both be right; and if you will grant me that I do not always think, I will in return concede to you the activity you contend for, and will qualify the difference between us by supposing, that though the soul be in herself an active principle, the influence of her present union, with a principle that is not such, makes her often dormant, suspends her operations, and affects her with a sort of deliquium, in which she suffers a temporary loss of all her functions. I have related to you my experience truly, and without disguise; you must,

therefore, either admit my assertion, that the soul does not necessarily always act, or deny that mine is an human soul: a negative, that I am sure you will not easily prove. So much for a dispute, which I little thought of being engaged in to-day.

Last night I had a letter from lord Dartmouth. It was to apprise me of the safe arrival of Cook's last voyage, which he was so kind as to lend me in St. James's Square. The reading of those volumes afforded me much amusement, and I hope some instruction. No observation, however, forced itself upon me with more violence than one that I could not help making on the death of captain Cook. God is a jealous God; and at Owhyhee the poor man was content to be worshipped. From that moment, the remarkable interposition of Providence in his favour was converted into an opposition, that thwarted all his purposes. He left the scene of his deification, but was driven back to it by a most violent storm, in which he suffered more than in any that had preceded it. When he departed, he left his worshippers still infatuated with an idea of his godship, consequently well disposed to serve him. At his return, he found them sullen, distrustful, and mysterious. A trifling theft was committed, which, by a blunder of his own in pursuing the thief after the property had been restored, was magnified to an affair of the last importance. One of their favourite chiefs was killed too by a blunder. Nothing, in short, but blunder and mistake attended him, till he fell breathless into the water, and then all was smooth again. The world indeed will not take notice, or see, that the dispensation bore evident marks of Divine displeasure; but a mind, I think, in any degree spiritual, cannot overlook them. We know from truth itself, that the death of Herod was for a similar offence. But Herod was in no sense a believer in God, nor had enjoyed half the opportunities with which our poor countryman had been favoured. It may be urged, perhaps, that he was in jest, that he meant nothing but his own amusement and that of his companions. I doubt it. He knows little of the heart, who does not know, that, even in a sensible man, it is flattered by every species of exaltation. But be it so, that he was

in sport—it was not humane, to say no worse of it, to sport with the ignorance of his friends, to mock their simplicity, to humour and acquiesce in their blind credulity. Besides, though a stock or stone may be worshipped blameless, a baptized man may not. He knows what he does, and, by suffering such honours to be paid him, incurs the guilt of sacrilege.

We are glad that you are so happy in your church, in your society, and in all your connections. I have not left myself room to say any thing of the love we feel for you. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CXCVII.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

November, 1784.

My dear friend,

To condole with you on the death of a mother, aged eighty-seven, would be absurd—rather, therefore, as is reasonable, I congratulate you on the almost singular felicity of having enjoyed the company of so amiable and so near a relation so long. Your lot and mine, in this respect, have been very different, as indeed in almost every other. Your mother lived to see you rise, at least to see you comfortably established in the world. Mine dying, when I was six years old, did not live to see me sink in it. You may remember with pleasure while you live, a blessing vouchsafed to you so long; and I, while I live, must regret a comfort of which I was deprived so early. I can truly say, that not a week passes (perhaps I might with equal veracity say a day), in which I do not think of her. Such was the impression her tenderness made upon me, though the opportunity she had for shewing it was so short. But the ways of God are equal—and when I reflect on the pangs she would have suffered had she been a witness of all mine, I see more cause to rejoice than to mourn, that she was hidden in the grave so soon.

We have, as you say, lost a lively and sensible neighbour in lady Austen; but we have been long accustomed to a state of retirement, within one degree of solitude; and, being naturally lovers of still life, can relapse into our former duality, without being unhappy at the change.

To me, indeed, a third is not necessary, while I can have the companion I have had these twenty years.

I am gone to the press again; a volume of mine will greet your hands some time either in the course of the winter, or early in the spring. You will find it, perhaps, on the whole, more entertaining than the former, as it treats a greater variety of subjects, and those, at least the most, of a sublunary kind. It will consist of a poem in six books, called the Task. To which will be added another, which I finished yesterday, called, I believe, *Tirocinium*, on the subject of education.

You perceive that I have taken your advice, and given the pen no rest.

LETTER CXCVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

March 20, 1785.

My dear William,

I THANK you for your letter. It made me laugh; and there are not many things capable of being contained within the dimensions of a letter, for which I see cause to be more thankful. I was pleased, too, to see my opinion of his lordship's *nonchalance*, upon a subject that you had so much at heart, completely verified. I do not know that the eye of a nobleman was ever dissected. I cannot help supposing, however, that, were that organ, as it exists in the head of such a personage, to be accurately examined, it would be found to differ materially in its construction from the eye of a commoner; so very different is the view that men in an elevated, and in an humble station, have of the same object. What appears great, sublime, beautiful, and important to you and to me, when submitted to my lord, or his grace, and submitted, too, with the utmost humility, is either too minute to be visible at all, or, if seen, seems trivial, and of no account. My supposition, therefore, seems not altogether chimerical.

In two months I have corrected proof sheets to the amount of ninety-three pages, and no more. In other words, I have received three packets. Nothing is quick enough for impatience; and I suppose that the impatience of an author has the quickest of all possible move-

ments. It appears to me, however, that at this rate we shall not publish till next autumn. Should you happen therefore to pass Johnson's door, pop in your head as you go, and just insinuate to him, that, were his remittances rather more frequent, that frequency would be no inconvenience to me. I much expected one this evening, a fortnight having now elapsed since the arrival of the last. But none came, and I felt myself a little mortified. I took up the newspaper, however, and read it. There I found, that the Emperor and the Dutch are, after all their negotiations, going to war. Such reflections as these struck me. A great part of Europe is going to be involved in the greatest of all calamities—troops are in motion—artillery is drawn together—cabinets are busied in contriving schemes of blood and devastation—thousands will perish, who are incapable of understanding the dispute; and thousands, who, whatever the event may be, are little more interested in it than myself, will suffer unspeakable hardships in the course of the quarrel. Well, Mr. Poet, and how then? You have composed certain verses, which you are desirous to see in print; and because the impression seems to be delayed, you are displeased, not to say dispirited. Be ashamed of yourself! You live in a world in which your feelings may find worthier subjects. Be concerned for the havoc of nations, and mourn over your retarded volume when you find a dearth of more important tragedies!

You postpone certain topics of conference to our next meeting. When shall it take place? I do not wish for you just now, because the garden is a wilderness, and so is all the country around us. In May we shall have 'sparagus, and weather in which we may stroll to Weston; at least we may hope for it; therefore come in May: you will find us happy to receive you, and as much of your fair household as you can bring with you.

We are very sorry for your uncle's indisposition. The approach of summer seems however to be in his favour, that season being of all remedies for the rheumatism, I believe, the most effectual.

I thank you for your intelligence concerning the celebrity of John Gilpin. You may be sure that it was agreeable—but your own feelings on occasion of

that article, pleased me most of all. Well, my friend, be comforted. You had not an opportunity of saying publicly, "I know the author." But the author himself will say as much for you soon, and perhaps will feel in doing so a gratification equal to your own.

In the affair of face-painting, I am precisely of your opinion. Adieu.

LETTER CXCIX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

April 30, 1785.

My dear friend,
I RETURN you thanks for a letter so warm with the intelligence of the celebrity of John Gilpin. I little thought, when I mounted him upon my Pegasus, that he would become so famous. I have learned also, from Mr. Newton, that he is equally renowned in Scotland, and that a lady there had undertaken to write a second part, on the subject of Mrs. Gilpin's return to London; but not succeeding in it as she wished, she dropped it. He tells me likewise, that the head master of St. Paul's school (who he is I know not) has conceived, in consequence of the entertainment that John has afforded him, a vehement desire to write to me. Let us hope he will alter his mind; for should we even exchange civilities on the occasion, Tirocinium will spoil all. The great estimation, however, in which this knight of the stone bottles is held, may turn out a circumstance propitious to the volume of which his history will make a part. Those events, that prove the prelude to our greatest success, are often apparently trivial in themselves, and such as seemed to promise nothing. The disappointment that Horace mentions is reversed—we design a mug, and it proves a hog'shead. It is a little hard, that I alone should be unfurnished with a printed copy of this facetious story. When you visit London next, you must buy the most elegant impression of it, and bring it with you. I thank you also for writing to Johnson. I likewise wrote to him myself. Your letter and mine together have operated to admiration. There needs nothing more, but that the effect be lasting, and the whole will soon be

printed. We now draw towards the middle of the fifth book of the *Task*. The man Johnson is like unto some vicious horses that I have known: they would not budge till they were spurred, and, when they were spurred, they would kick; so did he. His temper was somewhat disconcerted; but his pace was quickened, and I was contented.

I was very much pleased with the following sentence in Mr. Newton's last—"I am perfectly satisfied with the propriety of your proceeding, as to the publication."—Now, therefore, we are friends again. Now he once more inquires after the work, which, till he had disburthened himself of this acknowledgment, neither he nor I, in any of our letters to each other, ever mentioned. Some side-wind has wafted to him a report of those reasons by which I justified my conduct. I never made a secret of them. Both your mother and I have studiously deposited them with those who we thought were most likely to transmit them to him. They wanted only a hearing, which once obtained, their solidity and cogency were such, that they were sure to prevail.

You mention —. I formerly knew the man you mention, but his elder brother much better. We were school-fellows, and he was one of a club of seven Westminster men, to which I belonged, who dined together every Thursday. Should it please God to give me ability to perform the poet's part to some purpose, many whom I once called friends, but who have since treated me with a most magnificent indifference, will be ready to take me by the hand again; and some, whom I never held in that estimation, will, like — (who was but a boy when I left London), boast of a connection with me which they never had. Had I the virtues, and graces, and accomplishments of St. Paul himself, I might have them at Olney, and nobody would care a button about me, yourself and one or two more excepted. Fame begets favour; and one talent, if it be rubbed a little bright by use and practice, will procure a man more friends than a thousand virtues. Dr. Johnson (I believe), in the life of one of our poets, says, that he retired from the world flattering himself that he should be regretted. But the world never missed him. I think his observation upon it is, that the vacancy, made by the retreat of any

individual, is soon filled up; that a man may always be obscure, if he chooses to be so; and that he, who neglects the world, will be by the world neglected.

Your mother and I walked yesterday in the wilderness. As we entered the gate, a glimpse of something white, contained in a little hole in the gate-post, caught my eye. I looked again, and discovered a bird's nest, with two tiny eggs in it. By and by they will be fledged, and tailed, and get wing-feathers, and fly. My case is somewhat similar to that of the parent bird. My nest is in a little nook. Here I brood, and hatch, and in due time my progeny takes wing and whistles.

We wait for the time of your coming with pleasant expectations. Yours truly.

LETTER CC.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

June 25, 1785.

My dear friend,
I WRITE in a nook, that I call my *boudoir*. It is a summer-house, not much bigger than a sedan-chair, the door of which opens into the garden, that is now crowded with pinks, roses, and honeysuckles; and the window into my neighbour's orchard. It formerly served an apothecary, now dead, as a smoking-room; and under my feet is a trap-door, which once covered a hole in the ground, where he kept his bottles. At present, however, it is dedicated to sublimer uses. Having lined it with garden mats, and furnished it with a table and two chairs, here I write all that I write in summer-time, whether to my friends or to the public. It is secure from all noise, and a refuge from all intrusion; for intruders sometimes trouble me in the winter evenings at Olney. But (thanks to my *boudoir*!) I can now hide myself from them. A poet's retreat is sacred. They acknowledge the truth of that proposition, and never presume to violate it.

The last sentence puts me in mind to tell you, that I have ordered my volume to your door. My bookseller is the most dilatory of all his fraternity, or you would have received it long since. It is more than a month since I returned him the last proof, and consequently since the printing was finished. I sent him the

manuscript at the beginning of last November, that he might publish while the town was full; and he will hit the exact moment when it is entirely empty. Patience (you will perceive) is in no situation exempted from the severest trials; a remark that may serve to comfort you under the numberless trials of your own.

LETTER CCI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 27, 1785.

My dear friend,
I WAS low in spirits yesterday, when your parcel came and raised them. Every proof of attention and regard to a man who lives in a vinegar bottle, is welcome from his friends on the outside of it—accordingly your books were welcome (you must not forget by the way, that I want the original, of which you have sent me the translation only), and the ruffles from miss Shuttleworth most welcome. I am covetous, if ever man was, of living in the remembrance of absentees whom I highly value and esteem, and consequently felt myself much gratified by her very obliging present. I have had more comfort, far more comfort, in the connections that I have formed within the last twenty years, than in the more numerous ones that I had before.

Memorandum—The latter are almost all Unwins or Unwinisms.

You are entitled to my thanks also for the facetious engravings of John Gilpin. A serious poem is like a swan, it flies heavily, and never far; but a jest has the wings of a swallow, that never tire, and that carry it into every nook and corner. I am perfectly a stranger, however, to the reception that my volume meets with; and (I believe) in respect to my *nonchalance* upon that subject, if authors would but copy so fair an example, am a most exemplary character. I must tell you nevertheless, that although the laurels that I gain at Olney will never minister much to my pride, I have acquired some. The rev. Mr. S—— is my admirer, and thinks my second volume superior to my first. It ought to be so. If we do not improve by practice, then nothing can mend us; and a man has no more cause to be mortified at being told that he has excelled himself, than the

elephant had, whose praise it was, that he was the greatest elephant in the world, himself excepted. If it be fair to judge of a book by an extract, I do not wonder that you were so little edified by Johnson's Journal. It is even more ridiculous than was poor ——'s of flatulent memory. The portion of it given to us in this day's paper contains not one sentiment worth one farthing, except the last, in which he resolves to bind himself with no more unbidden obligations. Poor man! one would think, that to pray for his dead wife, and to pinch himself with church-fasts, had been almost the whole of his religion. I am sorry, that he, who was so manly an advocate for the cause of virtue in all other places, was so childishly employed, and so superstitiously too, in his closet. Had he studied his Bible more (to which, by his own confession, he was in great part a stranger), he had known better what use to make of his retired hours, and had trifled less. His lucubrations of this sort have rather the appearance of religious dotage, than of any vigorous exertions towards God. It will be well if the publication prove not hurtful in its effects, by exposing the best cause, already too much despised, to ridicule still more profane. On the other side of the same paper I find a long string of aphorisms, and maxims, and rules for the conduct of life, which, though they appear not with his name, are so much in his manner, with the above-mentioned, that I suspect them for his. I have not read them all, but several of them I read that were trivial enough: for the sake of one, however, I forgive him the rest—he advises never to banish hope entirely, because it is the cordial of life, although it be the greatest flatterer in the world. Such a measure of hope as may not endanger my peace by a disappointment, I would wish to cherish upon every subject in which I am interested. But there lies the difficulty. A cure however, and the only one, for all the irregularities of hope and fear, is found in submission to the will of God. Happy they that have it!

This last sentence puts me in mind of your reference to Blair in a former letter, whom you there permitted to be your arbiter to adjust the respective claims of *who* or *that*. I do not rashly differ from so great a grammarian, nor

do at any rate differ from him altogether—upon solemn occasions. God *who* heareth prayer, is right. Hector *who* slew Patroclus, is right. And the man *that* dresses me every day, is in my mind right also;—because the contrary would give an air of stiffness and pedantry to an expression that, in respect of the matter of it, cannot be too negligently made up.

Adieu, my dear William! I have scribbled with all my might, which, breakfast-time excepted, has been my employment ever since I rose, and it is now past one. Yours.

LETTER CCII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Oct. 12, 1785.

My dear cousin,
It is no new thing with you to give pleasure. But I will venture to say, that you do not often give more than you gave me this morning. When I came down to breakfast, and found upon the table a letter franked by my uncle, and when opening that frank I found that it contained a letter from you, I said within myself—"This is just as it should be. We are all grown young again, and the days, that I thought I should see no more, are actually returned." You perceive, therefore, that you judged well when you conjectured, that a line from you would not be disagreeable to me. It could not be otherwise than as in fact it proved, a most agreeable surprise; for I can truly boast of an affection for you, that neither years nor interrupted intercourse have at all abated. I need only recollect how much I valued you once, and with how much cause, immediately to feel a revival of the same value; if that can be said to revive, which at the most has only been dormant for want of employment. But I slander it when I say that it has slept. A thousand times have I recollected a thousand scenes, in which our two selves have formed the whole of the drama, with the greatest pleasure; at times, too, when I had no reason to suppose that I should ever hear from you again. I have laughed with you at the Arabian Nights Entertainment, which afforded us, as you well know, a fund of merriment that deserves

never to be forgot. I have walked with you to Netley Abbey, and have scrambled with you over hedges in every direction, and many other feats we have performed together, upon the field of my remembrance, and all within these few years. Should I say within these twelve months, I should not transgress the truth. The hours that I have spent with you were among the pleasantest of my former days, and are therefore chronicled in my mind, so deeply as to fear no erasure. Neither do I forget my poor friend, sir Thomas. I should remember him indeed, at any rate, on account of his personal kindness to myself; but the last testimony that he gave of his regard for you, endears him to me still more. With his uncommon understanding (for with many peculiarities he had more sense than any of his acquaintance) and with his generous sensibilities, it was hardly possible that he should not distinguish you as he has done. As it was the last, so it was the best proof, that he could give, of a judgment that never deceived him, when he would allow himself leisure to consult it.

You say that you have often heard of me:—that puzzles me. I cannot imagine from what quarter; but it is no matter. I must tell you, however, my cousin, that your information has been a little defective. That I am happy in my situation, is true; I live, and have lived these twenty years, with Mrs. Unwin, to whose affectionate care of me, during the far greater part of that time, it is (under Providence) owing, that I live at all. But I do not account myself happy in having been for thirteen of those years in a state of mind, that has made all that care and attention necessary; an attention and a care that have injured her health, and which, had she not been uncommonly supported, must have brought her to the grave. But I will pass to another subject: it would be cruel to particularize only to give pain; neither would I by any means give a sable hue to the first letter of a correspondence so unexpectedly renewed.

I am delighted with what you tell me of my uncle's good health. To enjoy any measure of cheerfulness at so late a day, is much. But to have that late day enlivened with the vivacity of youth, is much more, and, in these postdiluvian times, a rarity indeed. Happy, for the

most part, are parents who have daughters. Daughters are not apt to outlive their natural affections, which a son has generally survived, even before his boyish years are expired. I rejoice particularly in my uncle's felicity, who has three female descendants from his little person, who leave him nothing to wish for upon that head.

My dear cousin, dejection of spirits, which (I suppose) may have prevented many a man from becoming an author, made me one. I find constant employment necessary, and therefore take care to be constantly employed. Manual occupations do not engage the mind sufficiently; as I know by experience, having tried many. But composition, especially of verse, absorbs it wholly. I write, therefore, generally three hours in a morning, and in an evening I transcribe. I read also, but less than I write; for I must have bodily exercise, and therefore never pass a day without it.

You ask me where I have been this summer. I answer, at Olney. Should you ask me where I spent the last seventeen summers, I should still answer, at Olney. Ay, and the winters also, I have seldom left it; and, except when I attended my brother in his last illness, never, I believe, a fortnight together.

Adieu, my beloved cousin. I shall not always be thus nimble in reply, but shall always have great pleasure in answering you when I can. Yours, my dear friend and cousin.

LETTER CCIII.

To Lady Hesketh.

My dearest cousin,

I AM glad that I always loved you as I did. It releases me from any occasion to suspect that my present affection for you is indebted for its existence to any selfish considerations. No. I am sure I love you disinterestedly, and for your own sake; because I never thought of you with any other sensations than those of the truest affection, even while I was under the persuasion that I should never hear from you again. But with my present feelings, superadded to those that I always had for you, I find it no easy matter to do justice to my sensations. I perceive myself in a state of

mind similar to that of the traveller described in Pope's *Messiah*, who, as he passes through a sandy desert, starts at the sudden and unexpected sound of a waterfall. You have placed me in a situation new to me, and in which I feel myself somewhat puzzled how to behave. At the same time I would not grieve you, by putting a check upon your bounty. I would be as careful not to abuse it, as if I were a miser, and the question not about your money, but my own.

Although I do not suspect that a secret to you, my cousin, is any burthen; yet, having maturely considered that point since I wrote my last, I feel myself altogether disposed to release you from the injunction, to that effect, under which I laid you. I have now made such a progress in my translation, that I need neither fear that I shall stop short of the end, nor that any other rider of Pegasus should overtake me. Therefore, if at any time it should fall fairly in your way, or you should feel yourself invited to say I am so occupied, you have my poetship's free permission. Dr. Johnson read and recommended my first volume.

LETTER CCIV.

To the same.

Jan. 10, 1786.

It gave me great pleasure that you found my friend Unwin, what I was sure you would find him, a most agreeable man. I did not usher him in with the narrow-bones and cleavers of high-sounding panegyric; both because I was certain that whatsoever merit he had, your discernment would mark it; and because it is possible to do a man material injury, by making his praise his harbingers. It is easy to raise expectation to such a pitch, that the reality, be it ever so excellent, must necessarily fall below it.

I hold myself much indebted to Mr. —, of whom I have the first information from yourself, both for his friendly disposition towards me, and for the manner in which he marks the defects in my volume. An author must be tender indeed to wince on being touched so gently. It is undoubtedly as he says, and as you and my uncle say; you cannot be all

mistaken, neither is it at all probable that any of you should be so. I take it for granted, therefore, that there are inequalities in the composition; and I do assure you, my dear, most faithfully, that if it should reach a second edition, I will spare no pains to improve it. It may serve me for an agreeable amusement, perhaps, when Homer shall be gone, and done with. The first edition of poems has generally been susceptible of improvement. Pope, I believe, never published one in his life that did not undergo variations, and his longest pieces many. I will only observe, that inequalities there must be always, and in every work of length. There are level parts of every subject, parts which we cannot with propriety attempt to elevate. They are by nature humble, and can only be made to assume an awkward and uncouth appearance by being mounted. But again I take it for granted, that this remark does not apply to the matter of your objection. You were sufficiently aware of it before, and have no need that I should suggest it as an apology, could it have served that office, but would have made it for me yourself. In truth, my dear, had you known in what anguish of mind I wrote the whole of that poem, and under what perpetual interruption, from a cause that has since been removed, so that sometimes I had not an opportunity of writing more than three lines at a sitting; you would long since have wondered, as much as I do myself, that it turned out any thing better than Grub Street.

My cousin, give yourself no trouble to find out any of the magi to scrutinize my Homer. I can do without them; and if I were not conscious that I have no need of their help, I would be the first to call for it. Assure yourself that I intend to be careful to the utmost line of all possible caution, both with respect to language and versification. I will not send a verse to the press that shall not have undergone the strictest examination.

A subscription is surely on every account the most eligible mode of publication. When I shall have emptied the purses of my friends, and of their friends, into my own, I am still free to levy contributions upon the world at large, and I shall then have a fund to defray the expenses of a new edition. I have or-

dered Johnson to print the proposals immediately, and hope that they will kiss your hands before the week is expired.

I have had the kindest letter from Josephus that I ever had. He mentioned my purpose to one of the masters of Eton, who replied, that "such a work is much wanted." Affectionately yours.

LETTER CCV.

To the same.

Olney, Jan. 31, 1786.

It is very pleasant, my dearest cousin, to receive a present so delicately conveyed as that which I received so lately from Anonymous; but it is also very painful to have nobody to thank for it. I find myself therefore driven by stress of necessity to the following resolutions, *viz.* that I will constitute you my thanks-receiver general, for whatsoever gift I shall receive hereafter, as well as for those that I have already received from a nameless benefactor. I therefore thank you, my cousin, for a most elegant present, including the most elegant compliment that ever poet was honoured with; for a snuff-box of tortoise-shell, with a beautiful landscape on the lid of it, glazed with chrystal, having the figures of three hares in the fore-ground, and inscribed above with these words, *The peasant's nest*; and below with these, *Tiny, Puss, and Bess*. For all and every of these I thank you, and also for standing proxy on this occasion. Nor must I forget to thank you, that so soon after I had sent you the first letter of Anonymous, I received another in the same hand. There! Now I am a little easier.

I have almost conceived a design to send up half a dozen stout country fellows, to tie by the leg to their respective bed-posts the company that so abridges your opportunity of writing to me. Your letters are the joy of my heart; and I cannot endure to be robbed, by I know not whom, of half my treasure. But there is no comfort without a drawback; and therefore it is, that I, who have unknown friends, have unknown enemies also. Ever since I wrote last, I find myself in better health, and my nocturnal spasms and fever considerably abated. I intend to write to Dr. Kerr on Thurs-

day, that I may gratify him with an account of my amendment: for to him I know that it will be a gratification. Were he not a physician, I should regret that he lives so distant, for he is a most agreeable man; but being what he is, it would be impossible to have his company, even if he were a neighbour, unless in time of sickness; at which time, whatever charms he might have himself, my own must necessarily lose much of their effect on him.

When I write to you, my dear, what I have already related to the General, I am always fearful lest I should tell you that for news with which you are well acquainted. For once, however, I will venture—On Wednesday last, I received from Johnson the MS copy of a specimen that I had sent to the General, and, inclosed in the same cover, notes upon it by an unknown critic. Johnson, in a short letter, recommended him to me as a man of unquestionable learning and ability. On perusal and consideration of his remarks, I found him such; and having nothing so much at heart as to give all possible security to yourself and the General that my work shall not come forth unfinished, I answered Johnson that I would gladly submit my MS to his friend. He is, in truth, a very clever fellow, perfectly a stranger to me, and one who, I promise you, will not spare for severity of animadversion where he shall find occasion. It is impossible for you, my dearest cousin, to express a wish that I do not equally feel a wish to gratify. You are desirous that Maty should see a book of my Homer; and for that reason, if Maty will see a book of it, he shall be welcome, although time is likely to be precious, and consequently any delay, that is not absolutely necessary, as much as possible to be avoided. I am now revising the Iliad. It is a business that will cost me four months, perhaps five; for I compare the very words as I go, and if much alteration should occur, must transcribe the whole. The first book I have almost transcribed already. To these five months, Johnson says that nine more must be added for printing; and upon my own experience I will venture to assure you, that the tardiness of printers will make those nine months twelve. There is danger, therefore, that my subscribers may think that I make them wait too long, and that they who

know me not may suspect a bubble. How glad shall I be to read it over in an evening, book by book, as fast as I settle the copy, to you and to Mrs. Unwin! She has been my touchstone always; and without reference to her taste and judgment, I have printed nothing. With one of you at each elbow, I should think myself the happiest of all poets.

The General and I, having broken the ice, are upon the most comfortable terms of correspondence. He writes very affectionately to me, and I say every thing to him that comes uppermost. I could not write frequently to any creature living upon any other terms than those. He tells me of infirmities that he has, which make him less active than he was. I am sorry to hear that he has any such. Alas! alas! he was young when I saw him, only twenty years ago.

I have the most affectionate letter imaginable from Colman, who writes to me like a brother. The chancellor is yet dumb.

May God have you in his keeping, my beloved cousin! Farewell.

LETTER CCVI.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, Feb. 9, 1786.

My dearest cousin,
I HAVE been impatient to tell you, that I am impatient to see you again. Mrs. Unwin partakes with me in all my feelings upon this subject, and longs also to see you. I should have told you so by the last post, but have been so completely occupied by this tormenting specimen, that it was impossible to do it. I sent the General a letter on Monday, that would distress and alarm him; I sent him another yesterday, that will, I hope, quiet him again. Johnson has apologised very civilly for the multitude of his friend's strictures; and his friend has promised to confine himself, in future, to a comparison of me with the original, so that (I doubt not) we shall jog on merrily together. And now, my dear, let me tell you once more, that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will shew you my

prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks—every thing that I have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days not very far distant, and feel a part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn! Mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors but we could easily accommodate them all, though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June; because before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with mats, and spread the floor with mats; and there you shall sit with a bed of mignonne at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention, the country will not be in complete beauty. And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule; if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made. But a merciless servant having scrubbed it until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we shall be as happy as the day is long. Order yourself, my cousin, to the Swan at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him, whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be any thing better than a cask

to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too.

Adieu! my dearest, dearest cousin.

LETTER CCVII.

To the same.

Olney, Feb. 11, 1786.

My dearest cousin,

It must be (I suppose) a fortnight or thereabouts since I wrote last, I feel myself so alert and so ready to write again. Be that as it may, here I come. We talk of nobody but you. What we will do with you when we get you, where you shall walk, where you shall sleep—in short, every thing that bears the remotest relation to your well-being at Olney, occupies all our talking time, which is all that I do not spend at Troy.

I have every reason for writing to you as often as I can; but I have a particular reason for doing it now. I want to tell you, that by the diligence on Wednesday next I mean to send you a quire of my Homer for Maty's perusal. It will contain the first book, and as much of the second as brings us to the catalogue of the ships, and is every morsel of the revised copy that I have transcribed. My dearest cousin, read it yourself, let the General read it, do what you please with it, so that it reach Johnson in due time. But let Maty be the only critic that has any thing to do with it. The vexation, the perplexity, that attends a multiplicity of criticisms by various hands, many of which are sure to be futile, many of them ill-founded, and some of them contradictory to others, is inconceivable, except by the author whose ill-fated work happens to be the subject of them. This also appears to me self-evident, that if a work have past under the review of one man of taste and learning, and have had the good fortune to please him, his approbation gives security for that of all others qualified like himself. I speak thus, my dear, after having just escaped from such a storm of trouble, occasioned by endless remarks, hints, suggestions, and objections, as drove me almost to despair, and to the very verge of a resolution to drop my undertaking for ever. With infinite difficulty I at last sifted the

chaff from the wheat, availed myself of what appeared to me to be just, and rejected the rest, but not till the labour and anxiety had nearly undone all that Kerr had been doing for me. My beloved cousin, trust me for it, as you safely may, that temper, vanity, and self-importance had nothing to do in all this distress that I suffered. It was merely the effect of an alarm that I could not help taking, when I compared the great trouble I had with a few lines only, thus handled, with that which I foresaw such handling of the whole must necessarily give me. I felt beforehand that my constitution would not bear it. I shall send up this second specimen in a box that I have had made on purpose; and when Maty has done with the copy, and you have done with it yourself, then you must return it in said box to my translatorship. Though Johnson's friend has teased me sadly, I verily believe that I shall have no more such cause to complain of him. We now understand one another; and I firmly believe, that I might have gone the world through before I had found his equal in an accurate and familiar acquaintance with the original.

A letter to Mr. Urban in the last Gentleman's Magazine, of which I's book is the subject, pleases me more than any thing I have seen in the way of eulogium yet. I have no guess of the author.

I do not wish to remind the Chancellor of his promise. Ask you why, my cousin? Because I suppose it would be impossible. He has no doubt forgotten it entirely, and would be obliged to take my word for the truth of it, which I could not bear. We drank tea together with Mrs. C——e and her sister, in King Street, Bloomsbury, and there was the promise made. I said, "Thurlow, I am nobody, and shall be always nobody, and you will be chancellor. You shall provide for me when you are." He smiled, and replied, "I surely will." "These ladies," said I, "are witnesses." He still smiled, and said, "Let them be so, for I will certainly do it." But, alas! twenty-four years have passed since the day of the date thereof; and to mention it now would be to upbraid him with inattention to his plighted troth. Neither do I suppose that he could easily serve such a creature as I am, if he would.

Adieu, whom I love entirely.

LETTER CCVIII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, Feb. 19, 1786.

My dearest cousin,
SINCE so it must be, so it shall be. If you will not sleep under the roof of a friend, may you never sleep under the roof of an enemy! An enemy however you will not presently find. Mrs. Unwin bids me mention her affectionately, and tell you, that she willingly gives up a part, for the sake of the rest; willingly, at least, as far as willingly may consist with some reluctance: I feel my reluctance too. Our design was, that you should have slept in the room that serves me for a study; and its having been occupied by you would have been an additional recommendation of it to me. But all reluctances are superseded by the thought of seeing you; and because we have nothing so much at heart as the wish to see you happy and comfortable, we are desirous therefore to accommodate you to your own mind, and not to ours. Mrs. Unwin has already secured for you an apartment, or rather two, just such as we could wish. The house in which you will find them is within thirty yards of our own, and opposite to it. The whole affair is thus commodiously adjusted; and now I have nothing to do but to wish for June; and June, my cousin, was never so wished for since June was made. I shall have a thousand things to hear, and a thousand to say; and they will all rush into my mind together, till it will be so crowded with things impatient to be said, that for some time I shall say nothing. But no matter—sooner or later they will all come out; and since we shall have you the longer for not having you under our own roof (a circumstance that, more than any thing, reconciles us to that measure), they will stand the better chance. After so long a separation, a separation that of late seemed likely to last for life, we shall meet each other as alive from the dead; and for my own part, I can truly say, that I have not a friend in the other world, whose resurrection would give me greater pleasure.

I am truly happy, my dear, in having pleased you with what you have seen of my Homer. I wish that all English

readers had your unsophisticated, or rather unadulterated, taste, and could relish simplicity like you. But I am well aware, that in this respect I am under a disadvantage; and that many, especially many ladies, missing many turns and prettinesses of expression that they have admired in Pope, will account my translation in those particulars defective. But I comfort myself with the thought, that in reality it is no defect; on the contrary, that the want of all such embellishments, as do not belong to the original, will be one of its principal merits with persons indeed capable of relishing Homer. He is the best poet that ever lived, for many reasons; but for none more than for that majestic plainness that distinguishes him from all others. As an accomplished person moves gracefully without thinking of it, in like manner the dignity of Homer seems to cost him no labour. It was natural to him to say great things, and to say them well; and little ornaments were beneath his notice. If Maty, my dearest cousin, should return to you my copy with any such strictures as may make it necessary for me to see it again before it goes to Johnson, in that case you shall send it to me, otherwise to Johnson immediately; for he writes me word, he wishes his friend to go to work upon it as soon as possible. When you come, my dear, we will hang all these critics together. For they have worried me without remorse or conscience. At least one of them has. I had actually murdered more than a few of the best lines in the specimen, in compliance with his requisitions, but plucked up my courage at last, and in the very last opportunity that I had, recovered them to life again by restoring the original reading. At the same time I readily confess, that the specimen is the better for all this discipline its author has undergone; but then it has been more indebted for its improvement to that pointed accuracy of examination to which I was myself excited, than to any proposed amendments from Mr. Critic; for as sure as you are my cousin, whom I long to see at Olney, so surely would he have done me irreparable mischief, if I would have given him leave.

My friend Bagot writes to me in a most friendly strain, and calls loudly upon me for original poetry. When I shall have done with Homer, probably he will

not call in vain. Having found the prime feather of a swan on the banks of the *smug and silver Trent*, he keeps it for me. Adieu, dear cousin.

I am sorry that the General has such indifferent health. He must not die. I can by no means spare a person so kind to me.

LETTER CCIX.

To the Rev. Walter Bagot.

Olney, Feb. 27, 1786.

ALAS! alas! my dear, dear friend, may God himself comfort you! I will not be so absurd as to attempt it. By the close of your letter, it should seem, that in this hour of great trial he withholds not his consolations from you. I know by experience, that they are neither few nor small: and though I feel for you as I never felt for man before, yet do I sincerely rejoice in this, that whereas there is but one true Comforter in the universe, under afflictions such as yours, you both know him and know where to seek him. I thought you a man the most happily mated that I had ever seen, and had great pleasure in your felicity. Pardon me, if now I feel a wish, that, short as my acquaintance with her was, I had never seen her. I should have mourned with you, but not as I do now. Mrs. Unwin sympathizes with you also most sincerely; and you neither are nor will be soon forgotten in such prayers as we can make at Olney. I will not detain you longer now, my poor afflicted friend, than to commit you to the tender mercy of God, and to bid you a sorrowful adieu!

Adieu! ever yours.

LETTER CCX.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, April 17, 1786.

My dearest cousin,
IF you will not quote Solomon, my dearest cousin, I will. He says, and as beautifully as truly—"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life!" I feel how much reason he had on his side when he made this observation, and am myself sick of your fortnight's delay.

* * * * *

The vicarage was built by lord Dartmouth, and was not finished till some time after we arrived at Olney, consequently it is new. It is a smart stone building, well sashed, by much too good for the living, but just what I would wish for you. It has, as you justly concluded from my premises, a garden, but rather calculated for use than ornament. It is square, and well walled, but has neither arbour, nor alcove, nor other shade, except the shadow of the house. But we have two gardens, which are yours. Between your mansion and ours is interposed nothing but an orchard, into which a door opening out of our garden, affords us the easiest communication imaginable, will save the round about by the town, and make both houses one. Your chamber windows look over the river, and over the meadows, to a village called Emberton, and command the whole length of a long bridge, described by a certain poet, together with a view of the road at a distance. Should you wish for books at Olney, you must bring them with you, or you will wish in vain; for I have none but the works of a certain poet, Cowper, of whom perhaps you have heard; and they are as yet but two volumes. They may multiply hereafter, but at present they are no more.

You are the first person for whom I have heard Mrs. Unwin express such feelings as she does for you. She is not profuse in professions, nor forward to enter into treaties of friendship with new faces; but when her friendship is once engaged, it may be confided in, even unto death. She loves you already; and how much more will she love you, before this time twelve-month! I have indeed endeavoured to describe you to her; but perfectly as I have you by heart, I am sensible that my picture cannot do you justice. I never saw one that did. Be you what you may, you are much beloved, and will be so at Olney; and Mrs. U. expects you with the pleasure that one feels at the return of a long absent dear relation; that is to say, with a pleasure such as mine. She sends you her warmest affections.

On Friday I received a letter from dear Anonymous, apprising me of a parcel that the coach would bring me on Saturday. Who is there in the world that has, or thinks he has, reason to love

me to the degree that he does? But it is no matter. He chooses to be unknown; and his choice is, and ever shall be, so sacred to me, that if his name lay on the table before me reversed, I would not turn the paper about that I might read it. Much as it would gratify me to thank him, I would turn my eyes away from the forbidden discovery. I long to assure him that those same eyes, concerning which he expresses such kind apprehensions lest they should suffer by this laborious undertaking, are as well as I could expect them to be if I were never to touch either book or pen. Subject to weakness, and occasional slight inflammations, it is probable that they will always be; but I cannot remember the time when they enjoyed any thing so like an exemption from those infirmities as at present. One would almost suppose, that reading Homer were the best ophthalmic in the world. I should be happy to remove his solicitude on the subject; but it is a pleasure that he will not let me enjoy. Well then, I will be content without it; and so content, that though I believe you, my dear, to be in full possession of all this mystery, you shall never know me, while you live, either directly, or by hints of any sort, attempt to extort or to steal the secret from you. I should think myself as justly punishable as the Bethshemites for looking into the ark, which they were not allowed to touch.

I have not sent for Kerr, for Kerr can do nothing but send me to Bath, and to Bath I cannot go for a thousand reasons. The summer will set me up again; I grow fat every day, and shall be as big as Gog or Magog, or both put together, before you come.

I did actually live three years with Mr. Chapman, a solicitor; that is to say, I slept three years in his house: but I lived; that is to say, I spent my days, in Southampton-Row, as you very well remember. There was I, and the future lord chancellor, constantly employed from morning to night in giggling and making giggle, instead of studying the law. Oh fie, cousin! how could you do so? I am pleased with lord Thurlow's inquiries about me. If he takes it into that inimitable head of his, he may make a man of me yet. I could love him heartily, if he would deserve it at my hands: that I did so once is certain. The du-

chess of ——! Who in the world sether a-going? But if all the duchesses in the world were spinning like so many whirligigs, for my benefit, I would not stop them. It is a noble thing to be a poet, it makes all the world so lively. I might have preached more sermons than even Tillotson did, and better, and the world would have been still fast asleep; but a volume of verse is a fiddle, that puts the universe in motion. Yours, my dear friend and cousin.

LETTER CCXI.

To Lady Hesketh.

O!ney, April 24, 1786.

YOUR letters are so much my comfort, that I often tremble, lest by any accident I should be disappointed; and the more because you have been, more than once, so engaged in company on the writing day, that I have had a narrow escape. Let me give you a piece of good counsel, my cousin: Follow my laudable example—write when you can; take Time's forelock in one hand and a pen in the other, and so make sure of your opportunity. It is well for me that you write faster than any body, and more in an hour than other people in two, else I know not what would become of me. When I read your letters, I hear you talk; and I love talking letters dearly, especially from you. Well! the middle of June will not be always a thousand years off; and when it comes I shall hear you, and see you too, and shall not care a farthing then if you do not touch a pen in a month. By the way, you must either send me or bring me some more paper; for before the moon shall have performed a few more revolutions, I shall not have a scrap left; and tedious revolutions they are just now, that is certain.

I give you leave to be as peremptory as you please, especially at a distance; but when you say that you are a Cowper (and the better it is for the Cowpers that such you are, and I give them joy of you, with all my heart), you must not forget, that I boast myself a Cowper too, and have my humours, and fancies, and purposes, and determinations, as well as others of my name, and hold them as fast as they can. You indeed tell me

how often I shall see you when you come. A pretty story truly. I am an *he* Cowper, my dear, and claim the privileges that belong to my noble sex.—But these matters shall be settled, as my cousin Agamemnon used to say, at a more convenient time.

I shall rejoice to see the letter you promise me; for though I met with a morsel of praise last week, I do not know that the week current is likely to produce me any; and having lately been pretty much pampered with that diet, I expect to find myself rather hungry by the time when your next letter shall arrive. It will therefore be very opportune. The morsel, above alluded to, came from—whom do you think? From ——, but she desires that her authorship may be a secret. And in my answer I promised not to divulge it, except to you. It is a pretty copy of verses, neatly written, and well turned; and when you come you shall see them. I intend to keep all pretty things to myself till then, that they may serve me as a bait to lure you hither more effectually. The last letter that I had from ——, I received so many years since, that it seems as if it had reached me a good while before I was born.

I was grieved at the heart that the General could not come, and that illness was in part the cause that hindered him. I have sent him, by his express desire, a new edition of the first book, and half the second. He would not suffer me to send it to you, my dear, lest you should post it away to Maty at once. He did not give that reason, but being shrewd I found it.

The grass begins to grow, and the leaves to bud, and every thing is preparing to be beautiful against you come. Adieu!

You inquire of our walks, I perceive, as well as our rides. They are beautiful. You inquire also concerning a cellar. You have two cellars. Oh! what years have passed since we took the same walks, and drank out of the same bottle! But a few more weeks, and then!

LETTER CCXII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, May 15, 1786.

My dearest cousin,
 FROM this very morning I begin to date the last month of our long separation, and confidently and most comfortably hope, that before the 15th of June shall present itself, we shall have seen each other. Is it not so? And will it not be one of the most extraordinary æras of my extraordinary life? A year ago we neither corresponded, nor expected to meet in this world. But this world is a scene of marvellous events, many of them more marvellous than fiction itself would dare to hazard; and (blessed be God!) they are not all of the distressing kind. Now and then, in the course of an existence, whose hue is for the most part sable, a day turns up that makes amends for many sighs and many subjects of complaint. Such a day shall I account the day of your arrival at Olney.

Wherefore is it (canst thou tell me?) that, together with all those delightful sensations to which the sight of a long absent dear friend gives birth, there is a mixture of something painful, flutterings, and tumults, and I know not what accompaniments of our pleasure, that are, in fact, perfectly foreign from the occasion? Such I feel, when I think of our meeting, and such, I suppose, feel you; and the nearer the crisis approaches, the more I am sensible of them. I know, beforehand, that they will increase with every turn of the wheels that shall convey me to Newport, when I shall set out to meet you; and that when we actually meet, the pleasure, and this unaccountable pain together, will be as much as I shall be able to support. I am utterly at a loss for the cause; and can only resolve it into that appointment, by which it has been fore-ordained that all human delights shall be qualified and mingled with their contraries. For there is nothing formidable in you. To me, at least, there is nothing such; no, not even in your menaces, unless when you threaten me to write no more. Nay, I verily believe, did I not know you to be what you are, and had less affection for you than I have, I should have fewer of these emotions, of which I would have none,

if I could help it. But a fig for them all! Let us resolve to combat with, and to conquer them. They are dreams. They are illusions of the judgment. Some enemy, that hates the happiness of human kind, and is ever industrious to dash it, works them in us; and their being so perfectly unreasonable as they are, is a proof of it. Nothing, that is such, can be the work of a good agent. This I know too, by experience, that, like all other illusions, they exist only by force of imagination, are indebted for their prevalence to the absence of their object, and, in a few moments after its appearance cease. So, then, this is a settled point, and the case stands thus: You will tremble as you draw near to Newport, and so shall I. But we will both recollect, that there is no reason why we should; and this recollection will, at least, have some little effect in our favour. We will likewise both take the comfort of what we know to be true, that the tumult will soon cease, and the pleasure long survive the pain, even as long, I trust, as we ourselves shall survive it.

What you say of Maty gives me all the consolation that you intended. We both think it highly probable that you suggest the true cause of his displeasure, when you suppose him mortified at not having had a part of the translation laid before him, ere the specimen was published. The General was very much hurt, and calls his censures harsh and unreasonable. He likewise sent me a consolatory letter on the occasion, in which he took the kindest pains to heal the wound that (he supposed) I might have suffered. I am not naturally insensible; and the sensibilities that I had by nature have been wonderfully enhanced by a long series of shocks, given to a frame of nerves that was never very athletic. I feel accordingly, whether painful or pleasant, in the extreme; am easily elevated, and easily cast down. The frown of a critic freezes my poetical powers, and discourages me to a degree that makes me ashamed of my own weakness. Yet I presently recover my confidence again. The half of what you so kindly say in your last, would at any time restore my spirits; and, being said by you, is infallible. I am not ashamed to confess, that, having commenced an author, I am most abundantly desirous to succeed as such. *I have (what perhaps you*

little suspect me of) in my nature an infinite share of ambition. But with it I have at the same time, as you well know, an equal share of diffidence. To this combination of opposite qualities it has been owing, that, till lately, I stole through life without undertaking any thing, yet always wishing to distinguish myself. At last I ventured—ventured too in the only path, that, at so late a period, was yet open to me; and am determined, if God have not determined otherwise, to work my way, through the obscurity that has been so long my portion, into notice. Every thing, therefore, that seems to threaten this my favourite purpose with disappointment, affects me nearly. I suppose that all ambitious minds are in the same predicament. He, who seeks distinction, must be sensible of disapprobation, exactly in the same proportion as he desires applause. And now, my precious cousin, I have unfolded my heart to you in this particular, without a speck of dissimulation. Some people, and good people too, would blame me. But you will not; and they (I think) would blame without just cause. We certainly do not honour God when we bury, or when we neglect to improve, as far as we may, whatever talent he may have bestowed on us, whether it be little or much. In natural things, as well as in spiritual, it is a never-failing truth, that to him, who *hath* (that is, to him who occupies what he hath diligently, and so as to increase it), more shall be given. Set me down, therefore, my dear, for an industrious rhymers, so long as I shall have the ability. For in this only way is it possible for me, so far as I can see, either to honour God or to serve man, or even to serve myself.

I rejoice to hear that Mr. Throckmorton wishes to be on a more intimate footing. I am shy, and suspect that he is not very much otherwise; and the consequence has been, that we have mutually wished an acquaintance without being able to accomplish it. Blessings on you for the hint that you dropped on the subject of the house at Weston! For the burthen of my song is, “Since we have met once again, let us never be separated, as we have been, more.”

LETTER CCXIII.

To the same.

Olney, May 25, 1786.

I HAVE at length, my cousin, found my way into my summer abode. I believe that I described it to you some time since, and will therefore now leave it undescribed. I will only say, that I am writing in a band-box, situated, at least in my account, delightfully, because it has a window in one side, that opens into that orchard through which, as I am sitting here, I shall see you often pass, and which therefore I already prefer to all the orchards in the world. You do well to prepare me for all possible delays, because in this life all sorts of disappointments are possible; and I shall do well, if any such delay of your journey should happen, to practise that lesson of patience, which you inculcate. But it is a lesson, which, even with you for my teacher, I shall be slow to learn. Being sure, however, that you will not procrastinate without cause, I will make myself as easy as I can about it, and hope the best. To convince you how much I am under discipline and good advice, I will lay aside a favourite measure, influenced in doing so by nothing but the good sense of your contrary opinion. I had set my heart on meeting you at Newport. In my haste to see you once again, I was willing to overlook many awkwardnesses I could not but foresee would attend it. I put them aside so long as I only foresaw them myself; but since I find that you foresee them too, I can no longer deal so slightly with them. It is therefore determined, that we meet at Olney. Much I shall feel, but I will not die if I can help it; and I beg that you will take all possible care to outlive it likewise; for I know what it is to be balked in the moment of acquisition, and should be loth to know it again.

Last Monday in the evening we walked to Weston, according to our usual custom. It happened, owing to a mistake of time, that we set out half an hour sooner than usual. This mistake we discovered while we were in the wilderness. So, finding that we had time before us, as they say, Mrs. Unwin proposed, that we should go into the village, and take a view of the house that I had just mentioned to you. We did so, and found it

such a one as in most respects would suit you well. But Moses Brown, our vicar, who, as I told you, is in his eighty-sixth year, is not bound to die for that reason. He said himself, when he was here last summer, that he should live ten years longer, and for aught that appears so he may. In which case, for the sake of its near neighbourhood to us, the vicarage has charms for me that no other place can rival. But this, and a thousand things more, shall be talked over when you come.

We have been industriously cultivating our acquaintance with our Weston neighbours since I wrote last, and they on their part have been equally diligent in the same cause. I have a notion, that we shall all suit well. I see much in them both that I admire. You know perhaps that they are Catholics.

It is a delightful bundle of praise, my cousin, that you have sent me. All jasmine and lavender. Whoever the lady is, she has evidently an admirable pen, and a cultivated mind. If a person reads, it is no matter in what language; and if the mind be informed, it is no matter whether that mind belongs to a man or a woman. The taste and the judgment will receive the benefit alike in both. Long before the *Task* was published, I made an experiment one day, being in a frolicsome mood, upon my friend. We were walking in the garden, and conversing on a subject similar to these lines—

The few, that pray at all, pray oft amiss;
And seeking grace t' improve the present good,
Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.

I repeated them, and said to him with an air of *nonchalance*, “Do you recollect those lines? I have seen them somewhere: where are they?” He put on a considering face, and after some deliberation replied, “Oh, I will tell you where they must be—in the *Night Thoughts*.” I was glad my trial turned out so well, and did not undeceive him. I mention this occurrence only in confirmation of the letter-writer’s opinion; but at the same time I do assure you, on the faith of an honest man, that I never in my life designed an imitation of Young, or of any other writer; for mimicry is my abhorrence, at least in poetry.

Assure yourself, my dearest cousin, that both for your sake, since you make

a point of it, and for my own, I will be as philosophically careful as possible, that these fine nerves of mine shall not be beyond measure agitated when you arrive. In truth, there is much greater probability that they will be benefited, and greatly too. Joy of heart, from whatever occasion it may arise, is the best of all nervous medicines; and I should not wonder if such a turn given to my spirits should have even a lasting effect, of the most advantageous kind, upon them. You must not imagine neither, that I am on the whole in any great degree subject to nervous affections; occasionally I am, and have been these many years, much liable to dejection. But at intervals, and sometimes for an interval of weeks, no creature would suspect it. For I have not that which commonly is a symptom of such a case belonging to me: I mean, extraordinary elevation in the absence of Mr. Blue-devil. When I am in the best health, my tide of animal sprightliness flows with great equality; so that I am never, at any time, exalted in proportion as I am sometimes depressed. My depression has a cause; and if that cause were to cease, I should be as cheerful thenceforth, and perhaps for ever, as any man need be. But, as I have often said, Mrs. Unwin shall be my expositor.

Adieu, my beloved cousin. God grant that our friendship, which while we could see each other never suffered a moment’s interruption, and which so long a separation has not in the least abated, may glow in us to our last hour, and be renewed in a better world, there to be perpetuated for ever! For you must know, that I should not love you half so well, if I did not believe you would be my friend to eternity. There is not room enough for friendship to unfold itself in full bloom, in such a nook of life as this. Therefore I am, and must, and will be, yours for ever.

LETTER CCXIV.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, May 29, 1786.

THOU dear, comfortable cousin, whose letters, among all that I receive, have this property peculiarly their own, that I expect them without trembling, and ne-

ver find any thing in them that does not give me pleasure! for which, therefore, I would take nothing in exchange that the world could give me, save and except that for which I must exchange them soon (and happy shall I be to do so), your own company. That, indeed, is delayed a little too long; to my impatience, at least, it seems so, who find the spring, backward as it is, too forward, because many of its beauties will have faded before you will have an opportunity to see them. We took our customary walk yesterday in the wilderness at Weston, and saw, with regret, the laburnums, syringas, and guelder-roses, some of them blown, and others just upon the point of blowing, and could not help observing—All these will be gone before lady Hesketh comes. Still, however, there will be roses, and jasmine, and honeysuckle, and shady walks, and cool alcoves, and you will partake them with us. But I want you to have a share of every thing that is delightful here, and cannot bear that the advance of the season should steal away a single pleasure before you can come to enjoy it.

Every day I think of you, and almost all day long; I will venture to say, that even you were never so expected in your life. I called last week at the Quaker's to see the furniture of your bed, the frame of which had reached me. It is, I assure you, superb; of printed cotton, and the subject classical. Every morning you will open your eyes on Phaeton kneeling to Apollo, and imploring his father to grant him the conduct of his chariot for a day. May your sleep be as sound as your bed will be sumptuous, and your nights, at least, will be well provided for.

I shall send up the sixth and seventh books of the Iliad shortly, and shall address them to you. You will forward them to the General. I long to shew you my workshop, and to see you sitting on the opposite side of my table. We shall be as close packed as two wax figures in an old-fashioned picture frame. I am writing in it now. It is the place in which I fabricate all my verse in summer time. I rose an hour sooner than usual this morning, that I might finish my sheet before breakfast, for I must write this day to the General.

The grass under my windows is all

bespangled with dew-drops, and the birds are singing in the apple trees among the blossoms. Never poet had a more commodious oratory in which to invoke his Muse.

I have made your heart ache too often, my poor dear cousin, with talking about my fits of dejection. Something has happened that has led me to the subject, or I would have mentioned them more sparingly. Do not suppose, or suspect, that I treat you with reserve; there is nothing, in which I am concerned, that you shall not be made acquainted with. But the tale is too long for a letter. I will only add, for your present satisfaction, that the cause is not exterior, that it is not within the reach of human aid, and that yet I have a hope myself, and Mrs. Unwin a strong persuasion, of its removal. I am indeed even now, and have been for a considerable time, sensible of a change for the better, and expect, with good reason, a comfortable lift from you. Guess then, my beloved cousin, with what wishes I look forward to the time of your arrival, from whose coming I promise myself not only pleasure, but peace of mind, at least an additional share of it. At present it is an uncertain and transient guest with me; but the joy with which I shall see and converse with you at Olney, may, perhaps, make it an abiding one.

LETTER CCXV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William,
How apt we are to deceive ourselves where self is in question! You say I am in your debt, and I accounted you in mine: a mistake to which you must attribute my arrears, if indeed I owe you any; for I am not backward to write where the uppermost thought is welcome.

I am obliged to you for all the books you have occasionally furnished me with: I did not indeed read many of Johnson's Classics: those of established reputation are so fresh in my memory, though many years have intervened since I made them my companions, that it was like reading what I read yesterday over again; and as to the minor Classics, I did not

think them worth reading at all. I tasted most of them, and did not like them. It is a great thing to be indeed a poet, and does not happen to more than one man in a century. Churchill, the great Churchill, deserved the name of poet. I have read him twice, and some of his pieces three times over; and the last time with more pleasure than the first. The pitiful scribbler of his life seems to have undertaken that task, for which he was entirely unqualified, merely because it afforded him an opportunity to traduce him. He has inserted in it but one anecdote of consequence, for which he refers you to a novel, and introduces the story with doubts about the truth of it. But his barrenness as a biographer I could forgive, if the simpleton had not thought himself a judge of his writings, and under the erroneous influence of that thought, informs his reader that "Gotham," "Independence," and "The Times," were catchpennies. Gotham, unless I am a greater blockhead than he, which I am far from believing, is a noble and beautiful poem, and a poem with which I make no doubt the author took as much pains as with any he ever wrote. Making allowance (and Dryden perhaps, in his "Absalom and Achitophel," stands in need of the same indulgence) for an unwarrantable use of Scripture, it appears to me to be a masterly performance. Independence is a most animated piece, full of strength and spirit, and marked with that bold masculine character, which I think is the great peculiarity of this writer. And The Times (except that the subject is disgusting to the last degree) stands equally high in my opinion. He is indeed a careless writer for the most part; but where shall we find, in any of those authors, who finish their works with the exactness of a Flemish pencil, those bold and daring strokes of fancy, those numbers so hazardingly ventured upon and so happily finished, the matter so compressed and yet so clear, and the colouring so sparingly laid on and yet with such a beautiful effect! In short, it is not his least praise, that he is never guilty of those faults as a writer, which he lays to the charge of others: a proof that he did not judge by a borrowed standard, or from rules laid down by critics, but that he was qualified to do it by his own native powers, and his

great superiority of genius. For he that wrote so much, and so fast, would, through inadvertence and hurry, unavoidably have departed from rules, which he might have found in books; but his own truly poetical talent was a guide which could not suffer him to err. A race-horse is graceful in his swiftest pace, and never makes an awkward motion, though he is pushed to his utmost speed. A cart-horse might perhaps be taught to play tricks in the riding-school, and might prance and curvet like his betters; but at some unlucky time would be sure to betray the baseness of his original. It is an affair of very little consequence perhaps to the well-being of mankind, but I cannot help regretting that he died so soon. Those words of Virgil, upon the immature death of Marcellus, might serve for his epitaph:—

*Ostendit terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra
Esse sinent——.*

Yours.

LETTER CCXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear friend,
I FIND the Register in all respects an entertaining medley; but especially in this, that it has brought to my view some long-forgotten pieces of my own production. I mean, by the way, two or three. Those I have marked with my own initials; and you may be sure I found them peculiarly agreeable, as they had not only the grace of being mine, but that of novelty likewise to recommend them. It is at least twenty years since I saw them. You, I think, was never a dabbler in rhyme. I have been one ever since I was fourteen years of age, when I began with translating an elegy of Tibullus. I have no more right to the name of a poet, than a maker of mouse-traps has to that of an engineer; but my little exploits in this way have at times amused me so much, that I have often wished myself a good one. Such a talent in verse as mine is, like a child's rattle, very entertaining to the trifler that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside. But it has served to rid me of some melancholy moments,

for I only take it up as a gentleman performer does his fiddle. I have this peculiarity belonging to me as a rhymist, that though I am charmed to a great degree with my own work while it is on the anvil, I can seldom bear to look at it when it is once finished. The more I contemplate it, the more it loses its value, till I am at last disgusted with it. I then throw it by, take it up again perhaps ten years after, and am as much delighted with it as at the first.

Few people have the art of being agreeable when they talk of themselves; if you are not weary, therefore, you pay me a high compliment.

I dare say miss S—— was much diverted by the conjecture of her friends. The true key to the pleasure she found at Olney was plain enough to be seen; but they chose to overlook it. She brought with her a disposition to be pleased; which whoever does is sure to find a visit agreeable, because they make it so. Yours.

LETTER CCXVII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Weston Lodge, Nov. 26, 1786.

It is my birthday, my beloved cousin, and I determine to employ a part of it, that it may not be destitute of festivity, in writing to you. The dark, thick fog, that has obscured it, would have been a burthen to me at Olney; but here I have hardly attended to it. The neatness and snugness of our abode compensates all the dreariness of the season; and whether the ways are wet or dry, our house at least is always warm and commodious. Oh for you, my cousin, to partake these comforts with us! I will not begin already to tease you upon that subject; but Mrs. Unwin remembers to have heard from your own lips, that you hate London in the spring. Perhaps, therefore, by that time you may be glad to escape from a scene, which will be every day growing more disagreeable, that you may enjoy the comforts of the Lodge. You well know that the best house has a desolate appearance unfurnished. This house accordingly, since it has been occupied by us and our *meubles*, is as much superior to what it was when you saw it,

as you can imagine. The parlour is even elegant. When I say that the parlour is elegant, I do not mean to insinuate that the study is not so. It is neat, warm, and silent; and a much better study than I deserve, if I do not produce in it an incomparable translation of Homer. I think every day of those lines of Milton, and congratulate myself on having obtained, before I am quite superannuated, what he seems not to have hoped for sooner:—

“And may at length my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage!”

For if it is not a hermitage, at least it is a much better thing; and you must always understand, my dear, that when poets talk of cottages, hermitages, and such-like things, they mean a house with six sashes in front, two comfortable parlours, a smart staircase, and three bed-chambers of convenient dimensions: in short, exactly such a house as this.

The Throckmortons continue the most obliging neighbours in the world. One morning last week, they both went with me to the cliffs—a scene, my dear, in which you would delight beyond measure, but which you cannot visit except in the spring or autumn. The heat of summer, and clinging dirt of winter, would destroy you. What is called the cliff is no cliff, nor at all like one, but a beautiful terrace, sloping gently down to the Ouse, and from the brow of which, though not lofty, you have a view of such a valley as makes that which you see from the hills near Olney, and which I have had the honour to celebrate, an affair of no consideration.

Wintry as the weather is, do not suspect that it confines me. I ramble daily, and every day change my ramble. Wherever I go, I find short grass under my feet; and when I have travelled perhaps five miles, come home with shoes not at all too dirty for a drawing-room. I was pacing yesterday under the elms that surround the field in which stands the great alcove, when lifting my eyes I saw two black genteel figures bolt through a hedge into the path where I was walking. You guess already who they were, and that they could be nobody but our neighbours. They had seen me from a hill at a distance, and had traversed a great turnip field to get

at me. You see, therefore, my dear, that I am in some request:—alas! in too much request with some people. The verses of Cadwallader have found me at last.

I am charmed with your account of our little cousin* at Kensington. If the world does not spoil him hereafter, he will be a valuable man. Good night, and may God bless thee!

LETTER CCXVIII.

To Lady Hesketh.

The Lodge, Dec. 4, 1786.

I SENT you, my dear, a melancholy letter, and I do not know that I shall now send you one very unlike it. Not that any thing occurs in consequence of our late loss more afflictive than was to be expected; but the mind does not perfectly recover its tone after a shock like that which has been felt so lately. This I observe, that though my experience has long since taught me, that this world is a world of shadows, and that it is the more prudent, as well as the more Christian course, to possess the comforts that we find in it, as if we possessed them not; it is no easy matter to reduce this doctrine into practice. We forget, that that God who gave them may, when he pleases, take them away; and that perhaps it may please him to take them at a time when we least expect, or are least disposed to part from them. Thus it has happened in the present case. There never was a moment in Unwin's life when there seemed to be more urgent want of him than the moment in which he died. He had attained to an age when, if they are at any time useful, men become more useful to their families, their friends, and the world. His parish began to feel and to be sensible of the advantages of his ministry. The clergy around him were many of them awed by his example. His children were thriving under his own tuition and management; and his eldest boy is likely to feel his loss severely, being by his years in some respect qualified to understand the value of such a parent; by his literary proficiency too clever for a schoolboy,

and too young at the same time for the university. The removal of a man in the prime of life, of such a character and with such connections, seems to make a void in society that can never be filled. God seemed to have made him just what he was, that he might be a blessing to others, and when the influence of his character and abilities began to be felt, removed him. These are mysteries, my dear, that we cannot contemplate without astonishment, but which will nevertheless be explained hereafter, and must in the mean time be revered in silence. It is well for his mother that she has spent her life in the practice of an habitual acquiescence in the dispensations of Providence; else I know that this stroke would have been heavier, after all that she has suffered upon another account, than she could have borne. She derives, as she well may, great consolation from the thought that he lived the life, and died the death, of a Christian. The consequence is, if possible, more unavoidable than the most mathematical conclusion, that therefore he is happy. So farewell, my friend Unwin! the first man for whom I conceived a friendship after my removal from St. Alban's, and for whom I cannot but still continue to feel a friendship, though I shall see thee with these eyes no more!

LETTER CCXIX.

To Samuel Rose, Esq.

Weston, Oct. 19, 1787.

Dear sir,

A SUMMONS from Johnson, which I received yesterday, calls my attention once more to the business of translation. Before I begin I am willing to catch though but a short opportunity to acknowledge your last favour. The necessity of applying myself with all diligence to a long work, that has been but too long interrupted, will make my opportunities of writing rare in future.

Air and exercise are necessary to all men, but particularly so to the man, whose mind labours; and to him, who has been all his life accustomed to much of both, they are necessary in the extreme. My time, since we parted, has been devoted entirely to the recovery

* Lord Cowper.

of health and strength for this service, and I am willing to hope with good effect. Ten months have passed since I discontinued by poetical efforts; I do not expect to find the same readiness as before, till exercise of the neglected faculty, such as it is, shall have restored it to me.

You find yourself, I hope, by this time as comfortably situated in your new abode, as in a new abode one can be. I enter perfectly into all your feelings on occasion of the change. A sensible mind cannot do violence even to a local attachment without much pain. When my father died I was young, too young to have reflected much. He was rector of Berkhamstead, and there I was born. It had never occurred to me that a parson has no fee-simple in the house and glebe he occupies. There was neither tree, nor gate, nor stile, in all that country, to which I did not feel a relation; and the house itself I preferred to a palace. I was sent for from London to attend him in his last illness, and he died just before I arrived. Then, and not till then, I felt for the first time that I and my native place were disunited for ever. I sighed a long adieu to fields and woods, from which I once thought I should never be parted; and was at no time so sensible of their beauties as just when I left them all behind me, to return no more.

LETTER CCXX.

To Lady Hesketh.

The Lodge, Nov. 10, 1737.

THE parliament, my dearest eousin, prorogued continually, is a meteor dancing before my eyes, promising me my wish only to disappoint me; and none but the king and his ministers can tell when you and I shall come together. I hope however that the period, though so often postponed, is not far distant; and that once more I shall behold you, and experience your power to make winter gay and sprightly.

I have a kitten, the drollest of all creatures that ever wore a cat's skin. Her gambols are not to be described, and would be incredible if they could. In point of size she is likely to be a kitten always, being extremely small of her

age; but time, I suppose, that spoils every thing, will make her also a cat. You will see her, I hope, before that melancholy period shall arrive; for no wisdom that she may gain by experience and reflection hereafter will compensate the loss of her present hilarity. She is dressed in a tortoise-shell suit, and I know that you will delight in her.

Mrs. Throckmorton carries us tomorrow in her chaise to Chicheley. The event however must be supposed to depend on elements, at least on the state of the atmosphere, which is turbulent beyond measure. Yesterday it thundered, last night it lightened, and at three this morning I saw the sky as red as a city in flames could have made it. I have a leech in a bottle that foretels all these prodigies and convulsions of nature. No, not, as you will naturally conjecture, by articulate utterance of oracular notices, but by a variety of gesticulations, which here I have not room to give an account of. Suffice it to say, that no change of weather surprises him; and that, in point of the earliest and most accurate intelligence, he is worth all the barometers in the world. None of them all indeed can make the least pretence to foretel thunder—a species of capacity of which he has given the most unequivocal evidence. I gave but sixpence for him, which is a groat more than the market price; though he is in fact, or rather would be, if leeches were not found in every ditch, an invaluable acquisition.

LETTER CCXXI.

To the same.

The Lodge, Nov. 27, 1737.

It is the part of wisdom, my dearest cousin, to sit down contented under the demands of necessity, because they are such. I am sensible that you cannot, in my uncle's present infirm state, and of which it is not possible to expect any considerable amendment, indulge either us, or yourself, with a journey to Weston. Yourself, I say, both because I know it will give you pleasure to see *Causidice mi** once more, especially in

* The appellation which Sir Thomas Hesketh used to give him in jest when he was of the Temple.

the comfortable abode where you have placed him; and because, after so long an imprisonment in London, you, who love the country, and have a taste for it, would of course be glad to return to it. For my own part, to me it is ever new; and though I have now been an inhabitant of this village a twelvemonth, and have during the half of that time been at liberty to expatiate and to make discoveries, I am daily finding out fresh scenes and walks, which you would never be satisfied with enjoying—some of them are unapproachable by you either on foot or in your carriage. Had you twenty toes (whereas I suppose you have but ten) you could not reach them; and coach-wheels have never been seen there since the flood. Before it indeed (as Burnet says that the earth was then perfectly free from all inequalities in its surface), they might have been seen there every day. We have other walks both upon hill tops, and in valleys beneath, some of which by the help of your carriage, and many of them without its help, would be always at your command.

On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with me. I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and, being desired to sit, spoke as follows: "Sir, I am clerk of the parish of All-Saints in Northampton; brother of Mr. C. the upholsterer. It is customary for the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You will do me a great favour, sir, if you would furnish me with one." To this I replied, "Mr. C., you have several men of genius in your town, why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, C——, the statuary, who, every body knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He surely is the man of all the world for your purpose."—"Alas! sir, I have heretofore borrowed help from him, but he is a gentleman of so much reading, that the people of our town cannot understand him." I confess to you, my dear, I felt all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, Perhaps, my good friend, they may find me unintelligible too for the same reason. But on asking him whe-

ther he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of my Muse, and on his replying in the affirmative, I felt my mortified vanity a little consoled, and pitying the poor man's distress, which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him. The waggon has accordingly gone this day to Northampton loaded in part with my effusions in the mortuary style. A fig for poets who write epitaphs upon individuals. I have written *one*, that serves *two hundred* persons.

A few days since I received a second very obliging letter from Mr. M——. He tells me that his own papers, which are by far, he is sorry to say, the most numerous, are marked V. I. Z. Accordingly, my dear, I am happy to find that I am engaged in a correspondence with Mr. Viz, a gentleman for whom I have always entertained the profoundest veneration. But the serious fact is, that the papers distinguished by those signatures have ever pleased me most, and struck me as the work of a sensible man, who knows the world well, and has more of Addison's delicate humour than any body.

A poor man begged food at the hall lately. The cook gave him some vermicelli soup. He ladled it about some time with the spoon, and then returned it to her, saying, "I am a poor man, it is true, and I am very hungry, but yet I cannot eat broth with maggots in it." Once more, my dear, a thousand thanks for your box full of good things, useful things, and beautiful things.

Yours ever.

LETTER CCXXII.

To Lady Hesketh.

The Lodge, Jan. 19, 1758.

WHEN I have prose enough to fill my paper, which is always the case when I write to you, I cannot find in my heart to give a third part of it to verse. Yet this I must do, or I must make my packets more costly than worshipful, by doubling the postage upon you, which I should hold to be unreasonable. See then the true reason why I did not send you that same scribblement till you desired it. The thought which naturally presents itself to me on all such occasions is this

—Is not your cousin coming? Why are you impatient? Will it not be time enough to shew her your fine things when she arrives?

Fine things indeed I have few. He who has Homer to transcribe may well be contented to do little else. As when an ass, being harnessed with ropes to a sand-cart, drags with hanging ears his heavy burthen, neither filling the long echoing streets with his harmonious bray, nor throwing up his heels behind, frolicsome and airy, as asses less engaged are wont to do; so I, satisfied to find myself indispensably obliged to render into the best possible English metre eight and forty Greek books, of which the two finest poems in the world consist, account it quite sufficient if I may at last achieve that labour, and seldom allow myself those pretty little vagaries in which I should otherwise delight, and of which, if I should live long enough, I intend hereafter to enjoy my fill.

This is the reason, my dear cousin, if I may be permitted to call you so in the same breath with which I have uttered this truly heroic comparison; this is the reason why I produce at present but few occasional poems; and the preceding reason is that, which may account satisfactorily enough for my withholding the very few that I do produce. A thought sometimes strikes me before I rise; if it runs readily into verse, and I can finish it before breakfast, it is well; otherwise it dies, and is forgotten; for all the subsequent hours are devoted to Homer.

The day before yesterday, I saw for the first time Bunbury's new print, *The Propagation of a Lie*. Mr. Throckmorton sent it for the amusement of our party. Bunbury sells humour by the yard, and is I suppose the first vender of it who ever did so. He cannot therefore be said to have humour without measure (pardon a pun, my dear, from a man who has not made one before these forty years), though he may certainly be said to be immeasurably droll.

The original thought is good, and the exemplification of it in those very expressive figures, admirable. A poem on the same subject, displaying all that is displayed in those attitudes, and in those features (for faces they can hardly be called), would be most excellent. The

affinity of the two arts, *viz.* verse and painting, has been often observed; possibly the happiest illustration of it would be found, if some poet would ally himself to some draftsman, as Bunbury, and undertake to write every thing he should draw. Then let a musician be admitted of the party. He should compose the said poem, adapting notes to it exactly accommodated to the theme; so should the sister arts be proved to be indeed sisters, and the world die of laughing.

LETTER CCXXIII.

To the same.

The Lo'ge, Feb. 1, 1788.

PARDON me, my dearest cousin, the mournful ditty that I sent you last. There are times when I see every thing through a medium that distresses me to an insupportable degree; and that letter was written in one of them. A fog that had for three days obliterated all the beauties of Weston, and a north-east wind, might possibly contribute not a little to the melancholy that indited it. But my mind is now easy; your letter has made it so, and I feel myself as blithe as a bird in comparison. I love you, my cousin, and cannot suspect, either with or without cause, the least evil in which you may be concerned, without being greatly troubled! Oh Trouble! the portion of all mortals—but mine in particular—would I had never known thee, or could bid thee farewell for ever; for I meet thee at every turn: my pillows are stuffed with thee, my very roses smell of thee; and even my cousin, who would cure me of all trouble if she could, is sometimes innocently the cause of trouble to me.

I now see the unreasonableness of my late trouble; and would, if I could trust myself so far, promise never again to trouble either myself or you in the same manner, unless warranted by some more substantial ground of apprehension.

What I said concerning Homer, my dear, was spoken, or rather written, merely under the influence of a certain jocularity that I felt at that moment. I am in reality so far from thinking myself an ass, and my translation a sand-

cart, that I rather seem, in my own account of the matter, one of those flaming steeds harnessed to the chariot of Apollo, of which we read in the works of the ancients. I have lately, I know not how, acquired a certain superiority to myself in this business; and in this last revisal have elevated the expression to a degree far surpassing its former boast. A few evenings since I had an opportunity to try how far I might venture to expect such success of my labours as can alone repay them, by reading the first book of my Iliad to a friend of ours. He dined with you once at Olney. His name is Greathed, a man of letters and of taste. He dined with

us, and the evening proving dark and dirty, we persuaded him to take a bed. I entertained him as I tell you. He heard me with great attention, and with evident symptoms of the highest satisfaction, which, when I had finished the exhibition, he put out of all doubt by expressions which I cannot repeat. Only this he said to Mrs. Unwin, while I was in another room, that he had never entered into the spirit of Homer before, nor had any thing like a due conception of his manner. This I have said, knowing that it will please you, and will now say no more.

Adieu! my dear: will you never speak of coming to Weston more?

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION IV.

FROM THE LETTERS OF DR. BEATTIE, SIR WM. JONES, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

Dr. Beattie to Robert Arbuthnot, Esq.

Aberdeen, 12th December, 1763.

SINCE you left us, I have been reading Tasso's "Jerusalem," in the translation lately published by Hoole. I was not a little anxious to peruse a poem which is so famous over all Europe, and has so often been mentioned as a rival to the "Iliad," "Æneid," and "Paradise Lost." It is certainly a noble work; and though it seems to me to be inferior to the three poems just mentioned, yet I cannot help thinking it in the rank next to these. As for the other modern attempts at the "Epopæe," the "Henriade" of Voltaire, the "Epigoniad" of Wilkie, the "Leonidas" of Glover, not to mention the "Arthur" of Blackmore, they are not to be compared with it. Tasso possesses an exuberant and sublime imagination; though in exuberance it seems, in my opinion, inferior to our Spenser, and in sublimity inferior to Milton. Were I to compare Milton's genius with Tasso's, I would say, that the sublime of the latter is flashy and fluctuating, while that of the former diffuses an uniform, steady, and vigorous blaze: Milton is more majestic, Tasso more dazzling. Dryden, it seems, was of opinion, that the "Jerusalem Delivered" was the only poem of modern times that deserved the name of epic; but it is certain that criticism was not this writer's talent; and I think it is evident, from some passages of his works, that he either did not, or would not,

understand the "Paradise Lost." Tasso borrows his plot and principal characters from Homer, but his manner resembles Virgil's. He is certainly much obliged to Virgil, and scruples not to imitate, nor to translate him on many occasions. In the *pathetic*, he is far inferior both to Homer, to Virgil, and to Milton. His characters, though different, are not always distinct, and want those masterly and distinguishing strokes, which the genius of Homer and Shakespeare, and of them only, knows how to delineate. Tasso excels in describing pleasurable scenes, and seems peculiarly fond of such as have a reference to the passion of love. Yet, in characterizing this passion, he is far inferior, not only to Milton, but also to Virgil, whose fourth book he has been at great pains to imitate. The translation is smooth and flowing; but in dignity, and variety of numbers, is often defective, and often labours under a feebleness and prolixity of phrase, evidently proceeding either from want of skill, or from want of leisure in the versifier.

LETTER II.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 30th January, 1766.

YOUR zeal in promoting my interest demands my warmest acknowledgments; yet, for want of adequate expressions, I scarce know in what manner to pay them. I must therefore leave you to guess at my gratitude, by the emotions

which would arise in your own heart, on receiving a very important favour from a person of whom you had merited nothing, and to whom you could make no just return.

I suppose you have seen my letter to Dr. Blacklock. I hope, in due time, to be acquainted with your sentiments concerning it. I know not whether I have gained my point or not: but in composing that letter I was more studious of simplicity of diction than in any other of my pieces. I am not, indeed, in this respect, so very scrupulous as some critics of these times. I see no harm in using an expressive epithet, when, without the use of such an epithet, one cannot do justice to his idea. Even a compounded epithet, provided it be suitable to the genius of our language, and authenticated by some good writer, may often, in my opinion, produce a good effect. My notion of simplicity discards every thing from style which is affected, superfluous, indefinite, or obscure; but admits every grace, which, without encumbering a sentiment, does really embellish and enforce it. I am no friend to those prettinesses of modern style, which one may call the pompous earrings and flounces of the Muses, which, with some writers, are so highly in vogue at present: they may, by their glare and fluttering, take off the eye from imperfections; but I am convinced they disguise and disfigure the charms of genuine beauty.

I have of late been much engaged in metaphysics; at least I have been labouring with all my might to overturn that visionary science. I am a member of a club in this town, who style themselves the Philosophical Society. We have meetings every fortnight, and deliver discourses in our turn. I hope you will not think the worse of this society when I tell you, that to it the world is indebted for "A comparative View of the Faculties of Man," and an "Enquiry into Human Nature, on the Principles of Common Sense." Criticism is the field in which I have hitherto (chiefly at least) chosen to expatiate; but an accidental question lately furnished me with a hint, which I made the subject of a two hours' discourse at our last meeting. I have for some time wished for an opportunity of publishing something relating to the business of my own

profession, and I think I have now found an opportunity: for the doctrine of my last discourse seems to be of importance, and I have already finished two-thirds of my plan. My doctrine is this: that as we know nothing of the eternal relations of things, *that* to us *is* and must be *truth*, which we feel that we must believe; and *that* to us is falsehood, which we feel that we must disbelieve. I have shewn, that all genuine reasoning does ultimately terminate in certain principles, which it is impossible to disbelieve, and as impossible to prove: that therefore the ultimate standard of truth to us is common sense, or that instinctive conviction into which all true reasoning does resolve itself: that therefore what contradicts common sense is in itself absurd, however subtle the arguments which support it; for such is the ambiguity and insufficiency of language, that it is easy to argue on either side of any question, with acuteness sufficient to confound one who is not expert in the art of reasoning. My principles, in the main, are not essentially different from Dr. Reid's; but they seem to offer a more compendious method of destroying scepticism. I intend to shew (and have already in part shewn) that all sophistical reasoning is marked with certain characters which distinguish it from true investigation: and thus I flatter myself I shall be able to discover a method of detecting sophistry, even when one is not able to give a logical confutation of its arguments. I intend further to inquire into the nature of that modification of intellect which qualifies a man for being a sceptic; and I think I am able to prove, that it is not genius, but the want of it. However, it will be summer before I can finish my project. I own it is not without indignation, that I see sceptics and their writings (which are the bane, not only of science, but also of virtue) so much in vogue in the present age.

LETTER III.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 18th September, 1766.

You flatter me very agreeably, by wishing me to engage in a translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem." If I had all

the other accomplishments necessary to fit me for such an undertaking (which is by no means the case), I have not as yet acquired a sufficient knowledge of the Italian language, although I understand it tolerably well. My proficiency would have been much more considerable, if my health had allowed me to study; but I have been obliged to estrange myself from books for some months past. I intend to persist in my resolution of acquiring that language, for I am wonderfully delighted with the Italian poetry. It does not seem to abound much in those strokes of fancy that raise admiration and astonishment, in which I think the English very much superior; but it possesses all the milder graces in an eminent degree; in simplicity, harmony, delicacy, and tenderness, it is altogether without a rival. I cannot well account for that neglect of the Italian literature, which, for about a century past, has been fashionable among us. I believe Mr. Addison may have been instrumental in introducing, or at least in vindicating it; though I am inclined to think, that he took upon trust, from Boileau, that censure which he past upon the Italian poets, and which has been current among the critics ever since the days of the "Spectator."

A good translation of Tasso would be a very valuable accession to English literature; but it would be a most difficult undertaking, on account of the genius of our language, which, though in the highest degree copious, expressive, and sonorous, is not to be compared with the Italian in delicacy, sweetness, and simplicity of composition; and these are qualities so characteristic of Tasso, that a translator would do the highest injustice to his author, who should fail in transfusing them into his version. Besides, a work of such a nature must not only be laborious but expensive; so that a prudent person would not choose to engage in it without some hope, not only of being indemnified, but even rewarded; and such a hope it would be madness in me to entertain. Yet, to shew that I am not averse from the work (for, luckily for poor bards, poetry is sometimes its own reward, and is at any time amply rewarded when it gratifies the desire of a friend), I design, as soon as I have leisure, and sufficient skill in the language, to try my hand at a short

specimen. In the mean time, I flatter myself you will not think the worse of me for not making a thousand protestations of my insufficiency, and as many acknowledgments of my gratitude for the honour you do me in supposing me capable of such a work. The truth is, I have so much to say on this subject, that if I were only to begin, I should never have done. Your friendship and your good opinion, which I shall ever account it my honour to cultivate, I do indeed value more than I can express.

Your neglect of the modern philosophical sceptics, who have too much engaged the attention of these times, does equal honour to your understanding and to your heart. To suppose that every thing may be made matter of dispute, is an exceeding false principle, subversive of all true science, and prejudicial to the happiness of mankind. To confute, without convincing, is a common case, and indeed a very easy matter; in all conviction (at least in all moral and religious conviction), the heart is engaged as well as the understanding; and the understanding may be satisfied, or at least confounded, with a doctrine, from which the heart recoils with the strongest aversion. This is not the language of a logician; but this, I hope, is the language of an honest man, who considers all science as frivolous, which does not make men wiser and better; and to puzzle with words, without producing conviction (which is all that our metaphysical sceptics have been able to do), can never promote either the wisdom or the virtue of mankind. It is strange that men should so often forget that "Happiness is our being's end and aim." Happiness is desirable for its own sake; truth is desirable only as a means of producing happiness; for who would not prefer an agreeable delusion to a melancholy truth? What, then, is the use of that philosophy, which aims to inculcate truth at the expense of happiness, by introducing doubt and disbelief, in the place of confidence and hope? Surely the promoters of all such philosophy are either the enemies of mankind or the dupes of their own most egregious folly. I mean not to make any concessions in favour of metaphysical truth; genuine truth and genuine happiness were never inconsistent: but metaphysical truth (such as we find

in our sceptical systems) is not genuine, for it is perpetually changing; and no wonder, since it depends not on the common sense of mankind (which is always the same), but varies according as the talents and inclinations of different authors are different. The doctrines of metaphysical scepticism are either true or false: if false, we have little to do with them; if true, they prove the fallacy of the human faculties, and therefore prove too much; for it follows, as an undeniable consequence, that all human doctrines whatsoever (themselves not excepted) are fallacious, and consequently pernicious, insignificant, and vain.

LETTER IV.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, 22d September, 1766.

I AM not a little flattered by your friendly and spirited vindication of the poem on *Bufo*. Among the invidious and malicious, I have got a few enemies on account of that performance; among the candid and generous, not one. This, joined to the approbation of my own conscience, is entirely sufficient to make me easy on that head. I have not yet heard whether my little work has been approved or condemned in England. I have not even heard whether it has been published or not. However, the days of romantic hope are now happily over with me, as well as the desire of public applause; a desire of which I never had any title to expect the gratification; and which, though I had been able to gratify it, would not have contributed a single mite to my happiness. Yet I am thankful to Providence for having endued me with an inclination to poetry; for, though I have never been supremely blest in my own Muse, I have certainly been gratified, in the most exquisite degree, by the productions of others.

Those pieces of mine, from which I have received the highest entertainment, are such as are altogether improper for publication, being written in a sort of burlesque humour, for the amusement of some particular friend, or for some select company: of these I have a pretty large collection; and though I should

be ashamed to be publicly known as the author of many of them, I cannot help entertaining a certain partiality towards them; arising, perhaps, from this circumstance in their favour, that the pleasure they have yielded me has been altogether sincere, unmixed with that chagrin which never fails to attend an unfortunate publication.

Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the manner which I have adopted, admits equally of all these kinds of composition. I have written one hundred and fifty lines, and am surprised to find the structure of that complicated stanza so little troublesome. I was always fond of it; for I think it the most harmonious that ever was contrived. It admits of more variety of pauses than either the couplet or the alternate rhyme; and it concludes with a pomp and majesty of sound, which, to my ear, is wonderfully delightful. It seems also very well adapted to the genius of our language, which, from its irregularity of inflexion, and number of monosyllables, abounds in diversified terminations, and consequently renders our poetry susceptible of an endless variety of legitimate rhymes. But I am so far from intending this performance for the press, that I am morally certain it never will be finished. I shall add a stanza now and then, when I am at leisure, and when I have no humour for any other amusement: but I am resolved to write no more poetry with a view to publication, till I see some dawnings of a poetical taste among the generality of readers, of which, however, there is not at present any thing like an appearance.

My employment, and indeed my inclination, leads me rather to prose composition; and in this way I have much to do. The doctrines commonly comprehended under the name of moral philosophy are at present over-run with metaphysics, a luxuriant and tenacious weed, which seldom fails to choke and extirpate the wholesome plants, which it was perhaps intended to support and shelter. To this literary weed I have an insuperable aversion, which becomes stronger and stronger, in proportion as I

grow more and more acquainted with its nature, and qualities, and fruits. It is very agreeable to the paradoxical and licentious spirit of the age: but I am thoroughly convinced that it is fatal to true science, an enemy to the fine arts, destructive of genuine sentiment, and prejudicial to the virtue and happiness of mankind.

LETTER V.

Dr. Beattie to the Hon. Charles Boyd.

Aberdeen, 16th November, 1766.

OF all the chagrins with which my present infirm state of health is attended, none afflicts me more than my inability to perform the duties of friendship. The offer which you were generously pleased to make me of your correspondence, flatters me extremely; but alas! I have not as yet been able to avail myself of it. While the good weather continued, I strolled about the country, and made many strenuous attempts to run away from this odious giddiness; but the more I struggled, the more closely it seemed to stick by me. About a fortnight ago the hurry of my winter business began; and at the same time my malady recurred with more violence than ever, rendering me at once incapable of reading, writing, and thinking. Luckily I am now a little better, so as to be able to read a page, and write a sentence or two without stopping; which, I assure you, is a very great matter. My hopes and my spirits begin to revive once more. I flatter myself I shall soon get rid of this infirmity; nay, that I shall ere long be in the way of becoming a *great man*. For have I not head-achs, like Pope? vertigo, like Swift? grey hairs, like Homer? Do I not wear large shoes (for fear of corns), like Virgil? and sometimes complain of sore eyes (though not of *lippitude*), like Horace? Am I not at this present writing invested with a garment not less ragged than that of Socrates? Like Joseph, the patriarch, I am a mighty dreamer of dreams; like Nimrod, the hunter, I am an eminent builder of castles (in the air). I procrastinate, like Julius Caesar; and very lately, in imitation of Don Quixote, I rode a horse, lean, old, and lazy, like

Rosinante. Sometimes, like Cicero, I write bad verses; and sometimes bad prose, like Virgil. This last instance I have on the authority of Seneca. I am of small stature, like Alexander the Great; I am somewhat inclinable to fatness, like Dr. Arbuthnot and Aristotle; and I drink brandy and water, like Mr. Boyd. I might compare myself, in relation to many other infirmities, to many other *great men*; but if Fortune is not influenced in my favour by the particulars already enumerated, I shall despair of ever recommending myself to her good graces. I once had some thought of soliciting her patronage on the score of my resembling great men in their good qualities; but I had so little to say on that subject, that I could not for my life furnish matter for one well-rounded period: and you know a short ill-turned speech is very improper to be used in an address to a female deity.

Do not you think there is a sort of antipathy between philosophical and poetical genius? I question whether any one person was ever eminent for both. Lucretius lays aside the poet when he assumes the philosopher, and the philosopher when he assumes the poet: in the one character he is truly excellent, in the other he is absolutely nonsensical. Hobbes was a tolerable metaphysician, but his poetry is the worst that ever was. Pope's "Essay on Man" is the finest philosophical poem in the world; but it seems to me to do more honour to the imagination than to the understanding of its author: I mean its sentiments are noble and affecting, its images and allusions apposite, beautiful, and new; its wit transcendently excellent: but the scientific part of it is very exceptionable. Whatever Pope borrows from Leibnitz, like most other metaphysical theories, is frivolous and unsatisfying: what Pope gives us of his own, is energetic, irresistible, and divine. The incompatibility of philosophical and poetical genius is, I think, no unaccountable thing. Poetry exhibits the general qualities of a species; philosophy the particular qualities of individuals. *This* forms its conclusions from a painful and minute examination of single instances: *that* decides instantaneously, either from its own instinctive sagacity, or from a singular and unaccountable penetration, which at one glance sees all the instances which

the philosopher must leisurely and progressively scrutinize, one by one. This persuades you gradually, and by detail; the other overpowers you in an instant by a single effort. Observe the effect of argumentation in poetry; we have too many instances of it in Milton: it transforms the noblest thoughts into drawing inferences, and the most beautiful language into prose: it checks the tide of passion, by giving the mind a different employment in the comparison of ideas. A little philosophical acquaintance with the most beautiful parts of nature, both in the material and immaterial system, is of use to a poet, and gives grace and solidity to poetry; as may be seen in the "Georgics," the "Seasons," and the "Pleasures of Imagination:" but this acquaintance, if it is any thing more than superficial, will do a poet rather harm than good; and will give his mind that turn for minute observation which enfeebles the fancy by restraining it, and counteracts the native energy of judgment, by rendering it fearful and suspicious.

LETTER VI.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 17th January, 1768.

I HAVE been intending, for these several weeks, to write to you, though it were only to assure you of the continuance of my esteem and attachment. This place, you know, furnishes little amusement, either political or literary; and at this season it is rather more barren than usual.

I have, for a time, laid aside my favourite studies, that I might have leisure to prosecute a philosophical inquiry, less amusing indeed than poetry and criticism, but not less important. The extraordinary success of the sceptical philosophy has long filled me with regret. I wish I could undeceive mankind in regard to this matter: perhaps this wish is vain; but it can do no harm to make the trial. The point I am now labouring to prove, is the universality and immutability of moral sentiment, a point which has been brought into dispute, both by the friends and by the enemies of virtue. In an age less licentious in its principles, it would not, perhaps, be necessary to insist much on this point.

At present it is very necessary. Philosophers have ascribed all religion to human policy. Nobody knows how soon they may ascribe all morality to the same origin; and then the foundations of human society, as well as of human happiness, will be effectually undermined. To accomplish this end, Hobbes, Hume, Mandeville, and even Locke, have laboured; and I am sorry to say, from my knowledge of mankind, that their labour has not been altogether in vain. Not that the works of these philosophers are generally read, or even understood by the few who read them. It is not the mode, now-a-days, for a man to think for himself; but they greedily adopt the conclusions, without any concern about the arguments or principles whence they proceed; and they justify their own credulity by general declamations upon the transcendent merit of their favourite authors, and the universal deference that is paid to their genius and learning. If I can prove those authors guilty of gross misrepresentations of matters of fact, unacquainted with the human heart, ignorant even of their own principles, the dupes of verbal ambiguities, and the votaries of frivolous though dangerous philosophy, I shall do some little service to the cause of truth; and all this I will undertake to prove, in many instances of high importance.

You have, no doubt, seen Dr. Blacklock's new book*. I was very much surprised to see my name prefixed to the dedication, as he never had given me the least intimation of such a design. His friendship does me great honour. I should be sorry, if, in this instance, it has got the better of his prudence; and I have some reason to fear, that my name will be no recommendation to the work, at least in this place, where, however, the book is very well spoken of, by some who have read it. I should like to know how it takes at Edinburgh.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same.

Aberdeen, 4th May, 1770.

NOTHING, I think, is stirring in the literary world. All ranks are run mad

* "Paraclesis, or Consolations."

with politics; and I know not whether there was any period at which it was more unseasonable to publish new books. I do not mean, that the nation has no need of instruction; I mean only, that it has neither leisure nor inclination to listen to any.

I am a very great admirer of Armstrong's poem on "Health;" and therefore, as soon as I heard that the same author had published two volumes of "Miscellanies," I sent a commission for them with great expectations: but I am miserably disappointed. I know not what is the matter with Armstrong; but he seems to have conceived a rooted aversion at the whole human race, except a few friends, who, it seems, are dead. He sets the public opinion at defiance; a piece of boldness which neither Virgil nor Horace were ever so shameless as to acknowledge. It is very true, that living authors are often hardly dealt with by their contemporaries; witness Milton, Collins the poet, and many others: but I believe it is equally true, that no good piece was ever published, which did not, sooner or later, obtain the public approbation. How is it possible it should be otherwise? People read for amusement. If a book be capable of yielding amusement, it will naturally be read; for no man is an enemy to what gives him pleasure. Some books, indeed, being calculated for the intellects of a few, can please only a few; yet if they produce this effect, they answer all the end the authors intended; and if those few be men of any note, which is generally the case, the herd of mankind will very willingly fall in with their judgment, and consent to admire what they do not understand. I question whether there are now in Europe two thousand, or even one thousand persons, who understand a word of Newton's "Principia;" yet there are in Europe many millions who extol Newton as a very great philosopher. Those are but a small number who have any sense of the beauties of Milton; yet every body admires Milton, because it is the fashion. Of all the English poets of this age, Mr. Gray is most admired, and, I think, with justice; yet there are, comparatively speaking, but a few who know any thing of his, but his "Church-yard Elegy," which is by no means the best of his works. I do not think that Dr.

Armstrong has any cause to complain of the public: his "Art of Health" is not indeed a popular poem, but it is very much liked, and has often been printed. It will make him known and esteemed by posterity; and I presume he will be the more esteemed, if all his other works perish with him. In his "Sketches," indeed, are many sensible, and some striking remarks; but they breathe such a rancorous and contemptuous spirit, and abound so much in odious vulgarisms and colloquial execrations, that in reading we are as often disgusted as pleased. I know not what to say of his "Universal Almanack:" it seems to me an attempt at humour; but such humour is either too high or too low for my comprehension. The plan of his tragedy, called the "Forced Marriage," is both obscure and improbable; yet there are good strokes in it, particularly in the last scene.

As I know your taste and talents in painting, I cannot help communicating to you an observation, which I lately had occasion, not to make, for I had made it before, but to see illustrated in a very striking manner. I was reading the Abbé du Bos' "Reflections on Poetry and Painting." In his 13th section of the first volume, he gives some very ingenious remarks on two of Raphael's cartoons. Speaking of "Christ's Charge to Peter," he says of one of the figures in the group of apostles, "*Près de lui est placé un autre Apôtre embarrassé de sa contenance: on le discerne pour être d'un temperament melancholique à la maigreur de son visage livide, à sa barbe noire et plate, à l'habitude de son corps, enfin à tous les traits que les naturalistes ont assignés à ce temperament. Il se courbe; et les yeux fixement attachés sur J. C. il est dévoré d'une jalousie morne pour une choix dont il ne se plaindra point, mais dont il conservera long tems un vif ressentiment; enfin on reconnoit là Judas aussi distinctement qu'à le voir pendu au figuier, une bourse renversée au col. Je n'ai point prêté d'esprit à Raphael,*" &c. You see the ingenious Abbé is very positive; and yet you will immediately recollect, that the charge of "Feed my sheep," to which this cartoon refers, was given to Peter after the resurrection, and when, consequently, Judas could not be present (John xxi. 16). If it be

said, that this charge refers to the keys, which Peter carries in his bosom; a charge given long before; I answer, first, that the *sheep* in the back-ground is a presumption of the contrary; and secondly, that the wounds in the feet and hands of Jesus, and the number of apostles present, which is only eleven, are a certain proof, that the fact to which this cartoon relates happened after the resurrection. The Abbé's mistake is of little moment in itself; but it serves to illustrate this observation, that the expression of painting is at the best very indefinite, and generally leaves scope to the ingenious critic *de prêter d'esprit* to the painter.

LETTER VIII.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, 27th May, 1770.

I CANNOT express how much I think myself indebted to your friendship, in entering so warmly into all my concerns, and in making out so readily, and at such length, the two critical articles. The shortest one was sent back, in course of post, to Mr. Kincaid *, from whom you would learn the reasons that induced me to make some alterations in the analysis you had there made of my book. The other paper I return in this packet. I have made a remark or two at the end, but no alterations. Indeed, how could I? you understand my philosophy as perfectly as I do; you express it much better, and you embellish it with a great many of your own sentiments, which, though new to me, are exceedingly apposite to my subject, and set some parts of it in a fairer light than I have been able to do in my book. I need not tell you how happy I am in the thought, that this work of mine has your approbation; for I know you too well to impute to mere civility the many handsome things you have said in praise of it. I know you approve it, because I know you incapable to say one thing and think another; and I do assure you, I would not forego your approbation to avoid the censure of fifty Mr. Humes. What do I say? Mr. Hume's censure I am so far from being ashamed of, that I

think it does me honour. It is, next to his conversion (which I have no reason to look for), the most desirable thing I have to expect from that quarter. I have heard, from very good authority, that he speaks of me and my book with very great bitterness (I own, I thought he would rather have affected to treat both with contempt); and that he says I have not used him like a gentleman. He is quite right to set the matter upon that footing. It is an odious charge; it is an objection easily remembered, and, for that reason, will be often repeated by his admirers; and it has this farther advantage, that being (in the present case) perfectly unintelligible, it cannot possibly be answered. The truth is, I, as a rational, moral, and immortal being, and something of a philosopher, treated him as a rational, moral, and immortal being, a sceptic, and an atheistical writer. My design was, not to make a book full of fashionable phrases and polite expressions, but to undeceive the public in regard to the merits of the sceptical philosophy, and the pretensions of its abettors. To say that I ought not to have done this with plainness and spirit, is to say, in other words, that I ought either to have held my peace, or to have been a knave. In this case, I might, perhaps, have treated Mr. Hume as a gentleman; but I should not have treated society, and my own conscience, as became a man and a Christian. I have all along foreseen, and still foresee, that I shall have many reproaches, and cavils, and sneers, to encounter on this occasion; but I am prepared to meet them. I am not ashamed of my cause; and, if I may believe those whose good opinion I value as one of the chief blessings of life, I need not be ashamed of my work. You are certainly right in your conjecture, that it will not have a quick sale. Notwithstanding all my endeavours, to render it perspicuous and entertaining, it is still necessary for the person who reads it to *think a little*; a task to which every reader will not submit. My subject too is unpopular, and my principles such as a man of the world would blush to acknowledge. How then can my book be popular? If it refund the expense of its publication, it will do as much as any person, who knows the present state of the literary world, can reasonably expect from it.

* The publisher.

LETTER IX.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Inglis.

Aberdeen, 24th December, 1770.

WHILE I lived in your neighbourhood, I often wished for an opportunity of giving you my opinion on a subject, in which I know you are very deeply interested; but one incident or other always put it out of my power. That subject is the education of your son, whom, if I mistake not, it is now high time to send to some public place of education. I have thought much on this subject; I have weighed every argument that I could think of, on either side of the question. Much, you know, has been written upon it, and very plausible arguments have been offered, both for and against a public education. I set not much value upon these; speculating men are continually disputing, and the world is seldom the wiser. I have some little experience in this way; I have no hypothesis to mislead me; and the opinion or prejudice, which I first formed upon the subject, was directly contrary to that, which experience has now taught me to entertain.

Could mankind lead their lives in that solitude, which is so favourable to many of our most virtuous affections, I should be clearly on the side of a private education. But most of us, when we go out into the world, find difficulties in our way, which good principles and innocence alone will not qualify us to encounter; we must have some address and knowledge of the world different from what is to be learnt in books, or we shall soon be puzzled, disheartened, or disgusted. The foundation of this knowledge is laid in the intercourse of school-boys, or at least of young men of the same age. When a boy is always under the direction of a parent or tutor, he acquires such a habit of looking up to them for advice, that he never learns to think or act for himself; his memory is exercised, indeed, in retaining their advice, but his invention is suffered to languish, till at last it becomes totally inactive. He knows, perhaps, a great deal of history or science; but he knows not how to conduct himself on those ever-changing emergencies, which are too minute and too numerous to be comprehended in any system of advice. He

is astonished at the most common appearances, and discouraged with the most trifling (because unexpected) obstacles; and he is often at his wit's end, where a boy of much less knowledge, but more experience, would instantly devise a thousand expedients. Conscious of his own superiority in some things, he wonders to find himself so much inferior in others; his vanity meets with continual rubs and disappointments, and disappointed vanity is very apt to degenerate into sullenness and pride; he despises, or affects to despise, his fellows, because, though superior in address, they are inferior in knowledge; and they, in their turn, despise that knowledge, which cannot teach the owner how to behave on the most common occasions. Thus he keeps at a distance from his equals, and they at a distance from him; and mutual contempt is the natural consequence.

Another inconvenience, attending private education, is the suppressing of the principle of emulation, without which it rarely happens that a boy prosecutes his studies with alacrity or success. I have heard private tutors complain, that they were obliged to have recourse to flattery or bribery to engage the attention of their pupil: and I need not observe, how improper it is to set the example of such practices before children. True emulation, especially in young and ingenuous minds, is a noble principle; I have known the happiest effects produced by it; I never knew it to be productive of any vice. In all public schools it is, or ought to be, carefully cherished. Where it is wanting, in vain shall we preach up to children the dignity and utility of knowledge: the true appetite for knowledge is wanting; and when that is the case, whatever is crammed into the memory will rather surfeit and enfeeble, than improve the understanding. I do not mention the pleasure which young people take in the company of one another, and what a pity it is to deprive them of it. I need not remark, that friendships of the utmost stability and importance have often been founded on school-acquaintance; nor need I put you in mind, of what vast consequence to health are the exercises and amusements which boys contrive for themselves. I shall only observe further, that, when boys pursue

their studies at home, they are apt to contract either a habit of idleness, or too close an attachment to reading; the former breeds innumerable diseases, both in the body and soul: the latter, by filling young and tender minds with more knowledge than they can either retain or arrange properly, is apt to make them superficial and inattentive; or, what is worse, to strain, and consequently impair, the faculties, by overstretching them. I have known several instances of both. The human mind is more improved by thoroughly understanding one science, one part of a science, or even one subject, than by a superficial knowledge of twenty sciences and a hundred different subjects; and I would rather wish my son to be thoroughly master of "Euclid's Elements," than to have the whole of "Chambers's Dictionary" by heart.

The great inconvenience of public education arises from its being dangerous to morals. And indeed every condition and period of human life is liable to temptation. Nor will I deny, that our innocence, during the first part of life, is much more secure at home, than any where else; yet even at home, when we reach a certain age, it is not perfectly secure. Let young men be kept at the greatest distance from bad company, it will not be easy to keep them from bad books, to which, in these days, all persons may have easy access at all times. Let us, however, suppose the best; that both bad books and bad company keep away; and that the young man never leaves his parents' or tutor's side, till his mind be well furnished with good principles, and himself arrived at the age of reflection and caution: yet temptations must come at last; and when they come, will they have the less strength, because they are new, unexpected, and surprising? I fear not. The more the young man is surprised, the more apt will he be to lose his presence of mind, and consequently the less capable of self-government. Besides, if his passions are strong, he will be disposed to form comparisons between his past state of restraint, and his present of liberty, very much to the disadvantage of the former. His new associates will laugh at him for his reserve and preciseness; and his unacquaintance with their manners, and with the world, as it will

render him the more obnoxious to their ridicule, will also disqualify him the more, both for supporting it with dignity, and also for defending himself against it. Suppose him to be shocked with vice at its first appearance, and often to call to mind the good precepts he received in his early days; yet when he sees others daily adventuring upon it without any apparent inconvenience; when he sees them more gay (to appearance), and better received among all their acquaintance than he is; and when he finds himself hooted at, and in a manner avoided and despised, on account of his singularity; it is a wonder, indeed, if he persist in his first resolutions, and do not now at last begin to think, that though his former teachers were well-meaning people, they were by no means qualified to prescribe rules for his conduct. "The world," he will say, "is changed since their time (and you will not easily persuade young people that it changes for the worse); we must comply with the fashion, and live like other folks, otherwise we must give up all hopes of making a figure in it." And when he has got thus far, and begins to despise the opinions of his instructors, and to be dissatisfied with their conduct in regard to him, I need not add, that the worst consequences may not unreasonably be apprehended. A young man, kept by himself at home, is never well known, even by his parents; because he is never placed in those circumstances, which alone are able effectually to rouse and interest his passions, and consequently to make his character appear. His parents, therefore, or tutors, never know his weak side, nor what particular advices or cautions he stands most in need of; whereas, if he had attended a public school, and mingled in the amusements and pursuits of his equals, his virtues and his vices would have been disclosing themselves every day; and his teachers would have known what particular precepts and examples it was most expedient to inculcate upon him. Compare those who have had a public education with those who have been educated at home; and it will not be found, in fact, that the latter are, either in virtue or in talents, superior to the former. I speak, madam, from observation of fact, as well as from attending to the nature of the thing.

LETTER X.

*Dr. Beattie to the Right Hon. the
Dowager Lady Forbes*.*

Aberdeen, 12th October, 1772.

I WISH the merit of the "Minstrel" were such as would justify all the kind things you have said of it. That it has merit, every body would think me a hypocrite if I were to deny: I am willing to believe that it has even considerable merit; and I acknowledge, with much gratitude, that it has obtained from the public a reception far more favourable than I expected. There are in it many passages, no doubt, which I admire more than others do; and, perhaps, there are some passages which others are more struck with than I am. In all poetry, this, I believe, is the case, more or less; but it is much more the case in poems of a sentimental cast, such as the "Minstrel" is, than in those of the narrative species. In epic and dramatic poesy there is a standard acknowledged, by which we may estimate the merit of the piece; whether the narrative be probable, and the characters well drawn and well preserved; whether all the events be conducive to the catastrophe; whether the action is unfolded in such a way as to command perpetual attention, and undiminished curiosity—these are points of which, in reading an epic poem, or tragedy, every reader possessed of good sense, or tolerable knowledge of the art, may hold himself to be a competent judge. Common life, and the general tenor of human affairs, is the standard to which these points may be referred, and according to which they may be estimated. But of sentimental poetry (if I may use the expression), there is no external standard. By it the heart of the reader must be touched at once, or it cannot be touched at all. Here the knowledge of critical rules, and a general acquaintance of human affairs, will not form a true critic; sensibility, and a lively imagination, are the qualities which alone constitute a true taste for sentimental poetry. Again, your ladyship must have observed, that some sentiments are common to all men; others peculiar to persons of a certain character. Of the former sort are those

* Mrs. Dorothea Dale, widow of the right hon. William Lord Forbes.

which Gray has so elegantly expressed in his "Church-yard Elegy," a poem which is universally understood and admired, not only for its poetical beauties, but also, and perhaps chiefly, for its expressing sentiments in which every man thinks himself interested, and which, at certain times, are familiar to all men. Now the sentiments expressed in the "Minstrel," being not common to all men, but peculiar to persons of a certain cast, cannot possibly be interesting, because the generality of readers will not understand nor feel them so thoroughly as to think them natural. That a boy should take pleasure in darkness or a storm, in the noise of thunder, or the glare of lightning; should be more gratified with listening to music at a distance, than with mixing in the merriment occasioned by it; should like better to see every bird and beast happy and free, than to exert his ingenuity in destroying or ensnaring them—these, and such like sentiments, which, I think, would be natural to persons of a certain cast, will, I know, be condemned as unnatural by others, who have never felt them in themselves, nor observed them in the generality of mankind. Of all this I was sufficiently aware before I published the "Minstrel," and, therefore, never expected that it would be a popular poem. Perhaps, too, the structure of the verse (which, though agreeable to some, is not to all), and the scarcity of incidents, may contribute to make it less relished than it would have been, if the plan had been different in these particulars.

From the questions your ladyship is pleased to propose, in the conclusion of your letter, as well as from some things I have had the honour to hear you advance in conversation, I find you are willing to suppose, that, in Edwin, I have given only a picture of myself, as I was in my younger days. I confess the supposition is not groundless. I have made him take pleasure in the scenes in which I took pleasure, and entertain sentiments similar to those of which, even in my early youth, I had repeated experience. The scenery of a mountainous country, the ocean, the sky, thoughtfulness and retirement, and sometimes melancholy objects and ideas, had charms in my eyes, even when I was a schoolboy; and at a time when I was

so far from being able to express, that I did not understand, my own feelings, or perceive the tendency of such pursuits and amusements; and as to poetry and music, before I was ten years old I could play a little on the violin, and was as much master of Homer and Virgil, as Pope's and Dryden's translations could make me. But I am ashamed to write so much on a subject so trifling as myself and my own works. Believe me, madam, nothing but your ladyship's commands could have induced me to do it.

LETTER XI.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 13th February, 1773.

I AM deeply sensible of your goodness, in communicating to me, in so tender and soothing a manner, the news of a misfortune, which is indeed one of the severest I have ever felt. For these two months past my spirits have been unusually depressed, so that I am but ill prepared for so terrible a stroke. Of the loss which society and which his family have received; of the incomparable loss which I sustain, by the death of this excellent person, I can say nothing; my heart is too full, and I have not yet recovered myself so far as to think or speak coherently, on this or any other subject.

You justly observe, that his friends may derive no small consolation from the circumstance of his death having been without pain*, and from the well-grounded hope we may entertain, of his having made a happy change. But I find I cannot proceed: I thought I should have been able to give you some of my thoughts on this occasion; but the subject overpowers me. Write to me as soon, and as fully as you can, of the situation of his family, and whatever you may think I would wish to know. I shall endeavour to follow your kind advice, and to reconcile myself to this great affliction as much as I am able. My reason, I trust, is fully reconciled: I am thoroughly convinced that every dispensation of Providence is wise and

* Dr. Gregory was found dead in bed, probably from an attack of the gout, to which he was subject.

good; and that, by making a proper improvement of the evils of this life, we may convert them all into blessings. It becomes us, therefore, to adore the Supreme Benefactor, when he takes away, as well as when he gives; for He is wise and beneficent in both.

LETTER XII.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 3d May, 1773.

I HAVE just now finished the business of a melancholy winter. When I wrote to you last, which was in January, my health and spirits were in a very low state. In this condition, the unexpected death of the best of men, and of friends, came upon me with a weight, which at any time I should have thought almost insupportable, but which, at that time, was afflicting to a degree which human abilities alone could never have endured. But Providence, ever beneficent and gracious, has supported me under this heavy dispensation; and I hope I shall in time be enabled to review it, even with that cheerful submission which becomes a Christian, and which none but a Christian can entertain. I have a thousand things to say on this most affecting subject; but for your sake, madam, and for my own, I shall not, at present, enter upon them. Nobody can be more sensible than you are, of the irreparable loss which, not only his own family and friends, but which society in general sustains by the loss of this excellent person: and I need not tell you, for of this too I know you are sensible, that of all his friends (his own family excepted), none has so much cause of sorrow, on this occasion, as I. I should never have done, if I were to enter into the particulars of his kindness to me. For these many years past, I have had the happiness to be of his intimate acquaintance. He took part in all my concerns; and as I concealed nothing from him, he knew my heart and my character as well as I myself did; only the partiality of his friendship made him think more favourably of me than I deserved. In all my difficulties, I applied to him for advice and comfort, both which he had the art of communicating in such a way as never failed to

compose and strengthen my mind. His zeal in promoting my interest and reputation is very generally known. In a word (for I must endeavour to quit a subject, which will long be oppressive to my heart), my inward quiet, and external prosperity, were objects of his particular and unwearied care; and he never missed any opportunity of promoting both, to the utmost of his power. I wrote to his son soon after the fatal event; and have had the comfort to hear from several hands, that he, and his sisters, and the whole family, behave with a propriety that charms every body. In continuing his father's lectures he acquits himself to universal satisfaction.

LETTER XIII.

From the same to the same.

Aberdeen, 15th October, 1773.

I PURPOSELY delayed for a few days to answer your letter, that I might be at leisure to think seriously before I should venture to give my opinion, in regard to the important matter, about which you did me the honour to consult me. A religious education is indeed the greatest of all earthly blessings to a young man; especially in these days, when one is in such danger of receiving impressions of a contrary tendency. I hope, and earnestly wish, that this, and every other blessing, may be the lot of your nephew, who seems to be accomplished and promising far beyond his years.

I must confess, I am strongly prepossessed in favour of that mode of education that takes place in the English universities. I am well aware at the same time, that in those seminaries, there are, to some young men, many more temptations to idleness and dissipation, than in our colleges in Scotland; but there are also, if I mistake not, better opportunities of study to a studious young man, and the advantages of a more respectable and more polite society, to such as are discreet and sober. The most valuable parts of human literature, I mean the Greek and Latin classics, are not so completely taught in Scotland as in England; and I fear it is no advantage, I have sometimes known it a mis-

fortune, to those young men of distinction that come to study with us, that they find too easy and too favourable an admittance to balls, assemblies, and other diversions of a like kind, where the fashion not only permits, but requires, that a particular attention be paid to the younger part of the female world. A youth of fortune, with the English language, and English address, soon becomes an object of consideration to a raw girl; and equally so, perhaps, though not altogether on the same account, to her parents. Our long vacations, too, in the colleges in Scotland, though a convenience to the native student (who commonly spends those intervals at home with his parents), are often dangerous to the students from England; who being then set free from the restraints of academical discipline, and at a distance from their parents or guardians, are too apt to forget, that it was for the purpose of study, not of amusement, they were sent into this country.

All, or most of these inconveniencies, may be avoided at an English university, provided a youth have a discreet tutor, and be himself of a sober and studious disposition. There, classical erudition receives all the attentions and honours it can claim; and there the French philosophy, of course, is seldom held in very high estimation; there, at present, a regard to religion is fashionable; there, the recluseness of a college-life, the wholesome severities of academical discipline, the authority of the university, and several other circumstances I could mention, prove very powerful restraints to such of the youth as have any sense of true honour, or any regard to their real interest.

We, in Scotland, boast of our professors, that they give regular lectures in all the sciences, which the students are obliged to attend; a part of literary œconomy which is but little attended to in the universities of England. But I will venture to affirm, from experience, that if a professor does no more than deliver a set of lectures, his young audience will be little the wiser for having attended him. The most profitable part of my time is that which I employ in examinations, or in Socratical dialogue with my pupils, or in com-

menting upon ancient authors, all which may be done by a tutor in a private apartment, as well as by a professor in a public school. Lectures indeed I do, and must give; in order to add solemnity to the truths I would inculcate; and partly, too, in compliance with the fashion, and for the sake of my own character (for this, though not the most difficult part of our business, is that which shows the speaker to most advantage); but I have always found the other methods, particularly the Socratic form of dialogue, much more effectual in fixing the attention, and improving the faculties of the student.

I will not, madam, detain you longer with this comparison: it is my duty to give you my real sentiments, and you will be able to gather them from these imperfect hints. If it is determined that your nephew shall be sent to an university in Scotland, he may, I believe, have as good a chance for improvement at Edinburgh or Glasgow, as at any other: if the law is to form any part of his studies, he ought, by all means, to go to one or other of these places; as we have no law professors in any other part of this kingdom, except one in King's college, Aberdeen, whose office has been a sinecure for several generations. Whether he should make choice of Edinburgh or of Glasgow, I am at a loss to say: I was formerly well enough acquainted with the professors of both those societies, but, *tempora mutantur*. Dr. Reid is a very learned, ingenious, and worthy man; so is Dr. Blair: they are both clergymen; so that, I am confident, your nephew might lodge safely and profitably with either. Whether they would choose to accept of the office of tutor to any young gentleman, they themselves only can determine; some professors would decline it, on account of the laboriousness of their office; it is partly on this account, but chiefly on account of my health, that I have been obliged to decline every offer of this sort.

LETTER XIV.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 3d May, 1774.

I AM greatly obliged and honoured by what the hierarchy have done, and are doing for me. Of Dr. Law's attack I shall take no further notice.

I received a letter, two days ago, from Dr. Hurd*. It is a very kind letter, and much in praise of the "Minstrel." Lord Chesterfield's Letters, he says, are well calculated for the purpose of teaching "manners without morals" to our young people of quality. This opinion I had indeed begun to form concerning them, from some short extracts in the newspapers. In one of these extracts I was greatly surprised to see such a pompous encomium on Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*; which has always appeared to me a mere *vox et præterea nihil*. Plato was one of the first who introduced the fashion of giving us fine words instead of good sense; in this, as in his other faults, he has been successfully imitated by Shaftesbury; but I know not whether he, or any other author, has ever put together so many words, with so little meaning, as Bolingbroke, in his papers on patriotism.

Lord Monboddo's second volume has been published some time. It is, I think, much better than the first, and contains much learning, and not a little ingenuity: but can never be very interesting, except to those who aim at a grammatical and critical knowledge of the Greek tongue. Lord Kaimes's "Sketches" I have seen. They are not much different from what I expected. A man who reads thirty years, with a view to collect facts in support of two or three whimsical theories, may, no doubt, collect a great number of facts, and make a very large book. The world will wonder when they hear of a modern philosopher, who seriously denies the existence of such a principle as universal benevolence;—a point of which no good man can entertain a doubt for a single moment.

I am sorry for poor Goldsmith. There were some things in his temper which I did not like; but I liked many things in his genius: and I was sorry to find, last

* Afterwards lord bishop of Worcester.

summer, that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However, when next we meet, all this will be forgotten; and the jealousy of authors, which Dr. Gregory used to say was next in rank to that of physicians, will be no more.

I am glad that you are pleased with the additional stanzas of the second canto of the "Minstrel;" but I fear you are too indulgent. How it will be relished by the public, I cannot even guess. I know all its faults; but I cannot remedy them, for they are faults in the first concoction; they result from the imperfection of the plan. I am much obliged to you, madam, for advising that two copies should be presented to their majesties; which, Dilly writes me word, has been done by my good friend Dr. Majendie. This honour I meant to have solicited when the second edition came out, which will be soon. My reason for this delay was, that the first edition having been put to the press, and some sheets of it printed off before I knew, I had it not in my power to order any copies on fine paper. But it is better as it is: the paper of the copy I have is not at all amiss.

My "Essay on Laughter" advances but slowly. I have all my materials at hand; but my health obliges me to labour very moderately in reducing them into order. I am very unwilling to relinquish the hope of receiving from you, madam, some assistance in completing my volume. I beg you will think of it. Perhaps you may find more leisure when you come into the north.

Mr. Mason has never answered the letter I wrote to him, concerning the subscription. I guessed from the tenor of his letters, that he is (as you say) out of humour with the world. Mr. Dilly writes me word, that he says he is tempted to throw his *Life of Mr. Gray* (which is now finished, or nearly so) into the fire, so much is he dissatisfied with the late decision on literary property. By the way, I heartily wish the legislature may, by a new law, set this matter on a proper footing. Literature must suffer, if this decision remains unobviated.

LETTER XV.

The Rev. Dr. Porteus to Dr. Beattie.

Hunton, near Maidstone, Kent,
July 24, 1774

I am desired, by one of the episcopal bench*, whose name I am not yet at liberty to mention, to ask you, whether you have any objections to taking orders in the Church of England. If you have not, there is a living now vacant in his gift, worth near five hundred pounds a-year, which will be at your service.

Be pleased to send me your answer to this, as soon as possible, and direct it to me at Peterborough, in Northamptonshire, where I shall probably be, before your letter can reach me. I feel myself happy in being the instrument of communicating to you so honourable and advantageous a proof of that esteem, which your literary labours have secured to you amongst all ranks of people.

LETTER XVI.

Dr. Beattie to the Rev. Dr. Porteus.

Peterhead, Aug. 4, 1774.

I HAVE made many efforts to express, in something like adequate language, my grateful sense of the honour done me by the right reverend prelate, who makes the offer conveyed to me in your most friendly letter of the 24th July. But every new effort serves only to convince me, more and more, how unequal I am to the task.

When I consider the extraordinary reception which my weak endeavours in the cause of truth have met with, and compare the greatness of my success with the insignificance of my merit; what reasons have I not to be thankful and humble! to be ashamed that I have done so little public service, and to regret that so little *is in my power!* to rouse every power of my nature to purposes of benevolent tendency, in order to justify, by my intentions at least, the unexampled generosity of my benefactors!

My religious opinions would, no doubt, if I were to declare them, sufficiently account for, and vindicate, my becoming a member of the Church of England: and I flatter myself, that my studies,

* Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Winchester.

way of life, and habits of thinking, have always been such as would not disqualify me for an ecclesiastical profession. If I were to become a clergyman, the Church of England would certainly be my choice; as I think, that, in regard to church government, and church service, it has many great and peculiar advantages. And I am so far from having any natural disinclination to holy orders, that I have several times, at different periods of my life, been disposed to enter into them, and have directed my studies accordingly. Various accidents, however, prevented me; some of them pretty remarkable, and such as I think I might, without presumption, ascribe to a particular interposition of Providence.

The offer, now made me, is great and generous beyond all expectation. I am well aware of all the advantages and honours that would attend my accepting, and yet I find myself obliged, in conscience, to decline it; as I lately did another of the same kind (though not so considerable) that was made me, on the part of another English gentleman. The reasons which did then, and do now, determine me, I beg leave, sir, briefly to lay before you.

I wrote the "Essay on Truth," with the certain prospect of raising many enemies, with very faint hopes of attracting the public attention, and without any views of advancing my fortune. I published it, however, because I thought it might probably do a little good, by bringing to nought, or at least lessening the reputation of, that wretched system of sceptical philosophy, which had made a most alarming progress, and done incredible mischief to this country. My enemies have been at great pains to represent my views, in that publication, as very different: and that my principal or only motive was to make a book, and, if possible, to raise myself higher in the world. So that, if I were now to accept preferment in the church, I should be apprehensive that I might strengthen the hands of the gainsayer, and give the world some ground to believe, that my love of truth was not quite so ardent, or so pure, as I had pretended.

Besides, might it not have the appearance of levity and insincerity, and, by some, be construed into a want of

principle, if I were at these years (for I am now thirty-eight) to make such an important change in my way of life, and to quit, with no other *apparent* motive than that of bettering my circumstances, that church of which I have hitherto been a member? If my book has any tendency to do good, as I flatter myself it has, I would not, for the wealth of the Indies, do any thing to counteract that tendency; and I am afraid, that tendency might in some measure be counteracted (at least in this country), if I were to give the adversary the least ground to charge me with inconsistency. It is true, that the force of my reasonings cannot be *really* affected by my character; truth is truth, whoever be the speaker: but even truth itself becomes less respectable, when spoken, or supposed to be spoken, by insincere lips.

It has also been hinted to me, by several persons of very sound judgment, that what I have written, or may hereafter write, in favour of religion, has a chance of being more attended to, if I continue a layman, than if I were to become a clergyman. Nor am I without apprehensions (though some of my friends think them ill-founded), that, from entering so late in life, and from so remote a province, into the Church of England, some degree of ungracefulness, particularly in pronunciation, might adhere to my performances in public, sufficient to render them less pleasing, and consequently less useful.

Most of these reasons were repeatedly urged upon me, during my stay in England, last summer; and I freely own, that, the more I consider them, the more weight they seem to have. And from the peculiar manner in which the king has been graciously pleased to distinguish me, and from other circumstances, I have some ground to presume, that it is his majesty's pleasure that I should continue where I am, and employ my leisure hours in prosecuting the studies I have begun. This I can find time to do more effectually in Scotland than in England, and in Aberdeen than in Edinburgh; which, by the bye, was one of my chief reasons for declining the Edinburgh professorship. The business of my professorship here is indeed toilsome; but I have, by fourteen years' practice, made myself so much master of it, that

it now requires little mental labour; and our long summer vacation, of seven months, leaves me at my own disposal, for the greatest and best part of the year: a situation favourable to literary projects, and now become necessary to my health.

Soon after my return home, in autumn last, I had occasion to write to the archbishop of York on this subject. I specified my reasons for giving up all thoughts of church preferment; and his grace was pleased to approve of them; nay, he condescended so far as to say, they did me honour. I told his grace, moreover, that I had already given a great deal of trouble to my noble and generous patrons in England, and could not think of being any longer a burden to them, now that his majesty had so graciously and so generously made for me a provision equal to my wishes, and such as puts it in my power to obtain, in Scotland, every convenience of life to which I have any title, or any inclination to aspire.

I must, therefore, make it my request to you, that you would present my humble respects, and most thankful acknowledgments, to the eminent person at whose desire you wrote your last letter (whose name I hope you will not be under the necessity of concealing from me), and assure him, that, though I have taken the liberty to decline his generous offer, I shall, to the last hour of my life, preserve a most grateful remembrance of the honour he has condescended to confer upon me; and, to prove myself not altogether unworthy of his goodness, shall employ that health and leisure which Providence may hereafter afford me, in opposing infidelity, heresy, and error, and in promoting sound literature, and Christian truth, to the utmost of my power.

LETTER XVII.

Dr. Beattie to the Rev. Dr. Porteus.

Aberdeen, March 4, 1775.

I HAVE just finished a hasty perusal of Dr. Johnson's "Journey." It contains many things worthy of the author, and is, on the whole, very entertaining. His account of the Isles, is, I dare say, very just; I never was there, and there-

fore can say nothing of them, from my own knowledge. His accounts of some facts, relating to other parts of Scotland, are not unexceptionable. Either he must have been misinformed, or he must have misunderstood his informer, in regard to several of his remarks on the improvement of the country. I am surprised at one of his mistakes, which leads him once or twice into perplexity, and false conjecture: he seems not to have known, that, in the common language of Scotland, *Irish* and *Earse* are both used to denote the speech of the Scots Highlanders; and are as much synonymous (at least in many parts of the kingdom) as *Scotch* and *Scottish*. *Irish* is generally thought the genteeler appellation, and *Earse* the vulgar and colloquial. His remarks on the *trees* of Scotland must greatly surprise a native. In some of our provinces, trees cannot be reared by any method of cultivation we have yet discovered; in some, where trees flourish extremely well, they are not much cultivated, because they are not necessary; but in others, we have store of wood, and forests of great extent, and of great antiquity. I am sorry to see in Johnson some asperities, that seem to be the effect of national prejudice. If he thinks himself thoroughly acquainted with the character of the Scots as a nation, he is greatly mistaken. The Scots have virtues, and the Scots have faults, of which he seems to have had no particular information. I am one of those, who wish to see the English spirit and English manners prevail over the whole island; for I think the English have a generosity and openness of nature, which many of us want. But we are not all, without exception, a nation of cheats and liars, as Johnson seems willing to believe, and to represent us. Of the better sort of our people, the character is just the reverse. I admire Johnson's genius; I esteem him for his virtues; I shall ever cherish a grateful remembrance of the civilities I have received from him: I have often, in this country, exerted myself in defence both of his character and writings: but there are in this book several things which I cannot defend. His unbelief in regard to Ossian I am not surprised at; but I wonder greatly at his credulity in regard to the second sight. I cannot imagine on what grounds he could say,

that, in the universities of Scotland, every master of arts may be a doctor when he pleases. I never heard of such a thing, and I have been connected with our universities ever since I was a boy. Our method of giving doctor's degrees I do not approve of; but we proceed on a principle quite different from what Dr. Johnson mentions.

LETTER XVIII.

Mrs. Montagu to Dr. Beattie.

Tunbridge Wells, Sept. 3, 1775.

IT was not without trembling and horror I read the account of your overturn, and the dangerous circumstances with which it was attended. The traveller who is obliged to traverse a pathless wilderness, or in a frail boat to cross the angry ocean, devoutly prays to the Omnipotent to assist and preserve him; the occasion awakens his fears, and animates his devotion: but it is only from experience and reflection we are taught to consider every day, which passes in safety and closes in peace, as a mercy. If I had known, when you had set out from Denton, how near to a precipice you would have been thrown, I should more earnestly have prayed for your preservation through the journey: but the incident at once makes me sensible, that our safety depends not on the road, but the hand that upholds and guides us.

I left Denton the first day of August. On the second, by noon, I reached the episcopal palace of our friend, the archbishop of York*, at Bishop's Thorpe. I had before visited him at his family seat at Brodsworth. The man, who has a character of his own, is little changed by varying his situation: I can only say, that at his family seat I found him the most of a prelate of any gentleman, and, at his palace, the most of a gentleman I had ever seen. Native dignity is the best ground work of assumed and special dignity. We talked a great deal of you; the subject was copious and pleasant. We considered you, as a poet, with admiration; as a philosopher, with respect; as a Christian, with veneration; and as a friend, with affection. His grace's health is not quite what we could

wish. I could indulge myself in no longer than one day's delay at Bishop's Thorpe. I then made the best of my way to London, and, after a very short stay there, came to Tunbridge. I have the happiness of having Mrs. Carter in my house, and Mrs. Vesey is not at a quarter of a mile's distance: thus, though I live secluded from the general world, I have the society of those I love best. I propose to stay here about three weeks, then I return to London, to prepare for my expedition to the south of France. I have written to a gentleman at Montauban to endeavour to get for me a large house in any part of that town. I am assured that the climate of Montauban is very delightful; the air is dry, but not piercing, as at Montpellier. There is but little society; but there are some provincial *noblesse*, amongst whom I hope to find some who are more in the *ton* of Louis XIV's court, than I should at Versailles. It is long before the polished manners of a court arrive at the distant regions of a great country; but when there, they acquire a permanent establishment. At Paris, the minister, or the favourite of the day, is taken for the model, and there is a perpetual change of manners. I think with some pleasures of escaping the gloom of our winter and the bustle of London, and passing my time in the blessings of cheerful tranquillity and soft sunshine: at the same time, there is something painful in removing so far from one's dearest friends.

I wish much to see the verses on the pretty incident of the dove's alighting on Shakspeare's statue. Of whatever nature and disposition the animal had been, he might have been presented as a symbol of Shakspeare. The gravity and deep thought of the bird of wisdom; the sublime flight of the eagle to the starry regions and the throne of Jove; the pensive song of the nightingale, when she shuns the noise of folly, and soothes the midnight visionary; the pert jackdaw, that faithfully repeats the chit-chat of the market or the shop; the sky lark, that, soaring, seems to sing to the denizens of the air, and set her music to the tone of beings of another region—would all assort with the genius of universal Shakspeare.

* Hon. Dr. Hay Drummond, at that time archbishop of York.

LETTER XIX.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, September 17, 1775.

YOUR reflections on the little disaster, with which our journey concluded, exactly coincide with mine. I agree with Hawkesworth, that the peril and the deliverance are equally providential; and I wonder he did not see, that both the one and the other may be productive of the very best effects. These little accidents and trials are necessary to put us in mind of that superintending goodness, to which we are indebted for every breath we draw, and of which, in the hour of tranquillity, many of us are too apt to be forgetful. But you, madam, forget nothing which a Christian ought to remember; and therefore I hope and pray that Providence may defend you from every alarm. By the way, there are several things, besides that preface to which I just now referred, in the writings of Hawkesworth, that shew an unaccountable perplexity of mind in regard to some of the principles of natural religion. I observed, in his conversation, that he took a pleasure in ruminating upon riddles, and puzzling questions and calculations; and he seems to have carried something of the same temper into his moral and theological researches. His "*Almorán and Hamet*" is a strange confused narrative, and leaves upon the mind of the reader some disagreeable impressions in regard to the ways of providence; and from the theory of *pity*, which he has given us somewhere in the "*Adventurer*," one would suspect that he was no enemy to the philosophy of Hobbes. However, I am disposed to impute all this rather to a vague way of thinking, than to any perversity of heart or understanding. Only I wish, that in his last work he had been more ambitious to tell the plain truth, than to deliver to the world a wonderful story. I confess, that from the first I was inclined to consider his vile portrait of the manners of Otaheite as in part fictitious; and I am now assured, upon the very best authority, that Dr. Solander disavows some of those narrations, or at least declares them to be grossly misrepresented. There is, in almost all the late books of travels I have seen, a disposition on the part of

the author to recommend licentious theories. I would not object to the truth of any fact, that is warranted by the testimony of competent witnesses. But how few of our travellers are competent judges of the facts they relate! How few of them know any thing accurately of the language of those nations, whose laws, religion, and moral sentiments, they pretend to describe! And how few of them are free from that inordinate love of the marvellous, which stimulates equally the vanity of the writer, and the curiosity of the reader! Suppose a Japanese crew to arrive in England, take in wood and water, exchange a few commodities; and, after a stay of three months, to set sail for their own country, and there set forth a history of the English government, religion, and manners: it is, I think, highly probable, that, for one truth, they would deliver a score of falsehoods. But Europeans, it will be said, have more sagacity, and know more of mankind. Be it so: but this advantage is not without inconveniences, sufficient perhaps to counterbalance it. When a European arrives in any remote part of the globe, the natives, if they know any thing of his country, will be apt to form no favourable opinion of his intentions, with regard to their liberties; if they know nothing of him, they will yet keep aloof, on account of his strange language, complexion, and accoutrements. In either case he has little chance of understanding their laws, manners, and principles of action, except by a long residence in the country, which would not suit the views of one traveller in five thousand. He therefore picks up a few strange plants and animals, which he may do with little trouble or danger; and, at his return to Europe, is welcomed by the literati, as a philosophic traveller of most accurate observation, and unquestionable veracity. He describes, perhaps, with tolerable exactness, the soils, plants, and other irrational curiosities of the new country, which procures credit to what he has to say of the people; though his accuracy in describing the material phenomena is no proof of his capacity to explain the moral. One can easily dig to the root of a plant, but it is not so easy to penetrate the motive of an action: and till the motive of an action be known, we are no competent judges

of its morality; and in many cases the motive of an action is not to be known without a most intimate knowledge of the language and manners of the agent. Our traveller then delivers a few facts of the moral kind, which perhaps he does not understand, and from them draws some inferences suitable to the taste of the times, or to a favourite hypothesis. He tells us of a Californian, who sold his bed in a morning, and came with tears in his eyes to beg it back at night; whence he very wisely infers, that the poor Californians are hardly one degree above the brutes in understanding, for that they have neither foresight nor memory sufficient to direct their conduct on the most common occasions of life. In a word, they are quite a different species of animal from the European; and it is a gross mistake to think, that all mankind are descended from the same first parents. But one needs not go so far as to California, in quest of men who sacrifice a future good to a present gratification. In the metropolis of Great Britain one may meet with many reputed Christians, who would act the same part, for the pleasure of carousing half a day in a gin-shop. Again, to illustrate the same important truth, that man is a beast, or very little better, we are told of another nation, on the banks of the Orellana, so wonderfully stupid, that they cannot reckon beyond the number three, but point to the hair of their head whenever they would signify a greater number; as if four, and four thousand, were to them equally inconceivable. But, whence it comes to pass, that these people are capable of speech, or of reckoning at all, even so far as to three, is a difficulty of which our historian attempts not the solution. But, till he shall solve it, I must beg leave to tell him, that the one half of his tale contradicts the other, as effectually as if he had told us of a people, who were so weak as to be incapable of bodily exertion, and yet that he had seen one of them lift a stone of a hundred weight.—I beg your pardon, madam, for running into this subject. The truth is, I was lately thinking to write upon it; but I shall not have leisure these many months.

Take no farther concern about your dwarf. The person, whom you honour with your notice, I shall always think it

my duty to care for. I have let it be known in the town what you have done for him; which I hope will be a spur to the generosity of others. He has paid me but one visit as yet. His wants are few; and he seems to be modest as well as magnanimous. Both virtues certainly entitle him to consideration.

I have not yet seen the verses on Shakespeare and the dove. One thing I am certain of, which is, that they will contain nothing so much to the purpose, or so elegant, as what you have said on the occasion in prose. You justly remark, that any bird of character, from the eagle to the sky-lark, from the owl to the mock-bird, might symbolize with one or other of the attributes of that universal genius. But, do not you think that his dove-like qualities are among those on which he *now* reflects with peculiar complacency? And I think it could be shewn, from many things in his writings, that he resembled the dove as much as the eagle. There are no surly fellows among his favourite characters: and he seems to excel himself in the delineation of a good-natured one. Witness his Brutus, who is indeed finished *con amore*; and who, in gentleness of nature, exceeds even the Brutus of the good-natured Plutarch, as this last exceeded, by many degrees (if we are to believe some creditable historians), the true original Brutus, who fell at Philippi. There are besides, in the writings of Shakespeare, innumerable passages, that bespeak a mind peculiarly attentive to the rights of humanity and to the feelings of animal nature. Lear, when his distress is at the highest, sympathises with those, who, amidst the pinchings of want and nakedness, are exposed to the tempestuous elements. I need not put you in mind of the *poor sequestered stag* in “As you like it;” nor need I say more on a subject with which you are much better acquainted than I am.

LETTER XX.

Dr. Beattie to the Honourable Mr. Baron Gordon.

Aberdeen, 6th February, 1776.
I HAVE been very much employed in preparing some little things of mine for

the press ; otherwise I should sooner have acknowledged the favour of your most obliging letter.

The last time I read Virgil, I took it into my head, that the tenth and eleventh books of the *Æneid* were not so highly finished as the rest. Every body knows that the last six books are less perfect than the first six ; and I fancied that some of the last six came nearer to perfection than others. I cannot now recollect my reasons for this conceit ; but I propose to read the *Æneid* again, as soon as I have got rid of this publication ; and I hope I shall then be in a condition to give something of a reasonable answer to any question you may do me the honour to propose in regard to that matter.

I do not mean that the tenth or eleventh books are at all imperfect ; I only mean, that they fall short of Virgilian perfection. And many passages there are in both, which Virgil himself could not, in my opinion, have made better. Such are the story of Mezentius and Lausus, in the end of the tenth book ; and that passage in the eleventh, where old Evander meets the dead body of his son. Mezentius is a character of Virgil's own contrivance, and it is extremely well drawn : an old tyrant, hated by his people on account of his impiety and cruelty, yet graced with one amiable virtue, which is sometimes found in very rugged minds, a tender affection for a most deserving son. Filial affection is one of those virtues which Virgil dwells upon with peculiar pleasure ; he never omits any opportunity of bringing it in, and he always paints it in the most lovely colours. *Æneas*, *Ascanius*, *Euryalus*, *Lausus*, are all eminent for this virtue ; and *Turnus*, when he asks his life, asks it only for the sake of his poor old father. Let a young man read the *Æneid* with taste and attention, and then be an undutiful child if he can. I think there is nothing very distinguishing in *Camilla*. Perhaps it is not easy to imagine more than one form of that character. The adventures of her early youth are, however, highly interesting and wildly romantic. The circumstance of her being, when an infant, thrown across a river, tied to a javelin, is so very singular, that I should suppose Virgil had found it in some history ; and, if I mistake not, *Plutarch* has told such a story of king

Pyrrhus. The battle of the horse, in the end of the eleventh book, is well conducted, considering that Virgil was there left to his shifts, and had not Homer to assist him. The speeches of *Drances* and *Turnus* are highly animated ; and nothing could be better contrived to raise our idea of *Æneas* than the answer which *Diomedes* gives to the ambassadors from the Italian army.

I ought to ask pardon for troubling you with these superficial remarks. But a desire to approve myself worthy of being honoured with your commands, has led me into a subject for which I am not at present prepared. When I have the pleasure to pay my respects to you at *Cluny*, which I hope will be early in the summer, I shall be glad to talk over these matters, and to correct my opinions by yours.

LETTER XXI.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Aberdeen, 10th January, 1779.

MAJOR Mercer made me very happy with the news he brought from *Gordon castle*, particularly when he assured me that your grace was in perfect health. He told me too, that your solitude was at an end for some time ; which, I confess, I was not sorry to hear. Seasons of recollection may be useful ; but when one begins to find pleasure in sighing over Young's "Night Thoughts" in a corner, it is time to shut the book, and return to the company. I grant, that, while the mind is in a certain state, those gloomy ideas give exquisite delight ; but their effect resembles that of intoxication upon the body ; they may produce a temporary fit of feverish exultation, but qualms, and weakened nerves, and depression of spirits, are the consequence. I have great respect for *Dr. Young*, both as a man and as a poet ; I used to devour his "Night Thoughts" with a satisfaction not unlike that, which, in my younger years, I have found in walking alone in a churchyard, or in a wild mountain, by the light of the moon, at midnight. Such things may help to soften a rugged mind ; and I believe I might have been the better for them. But your grace's heart is already "too feelingly alive to each fine impulse ;" and,

therefore, to you I would recommend gay thoughts, cheerful books, and sprightly company: I might have said *company* without any limitation, for wherever you are the company must be sprightly. Excuse this obtrusion of advice. We are all physicians who have arrived at forty; and as I have been studying the anatomy of the human mind these fifteen years and upwards, I think I ought to be something of a soul-doctor by this time.

When I first read Young, my heart was broken to think of the poor man's afflictions. Afterwards, I took it in my head, that where there was so much lamentation there could not be excessive suffering; and I could not help applying to him sometimes those lines of a song,

"Believe me, the shepherd but feigns
He's wretched, to shew he has wit."

On talking with some of Dr. Young's particular friends in England, I have since found that my conjecture was right; for that while he was composing the "Night Thoughts" he was really as cheerful as any other man.

I well know the effect of what your grace expresses so properly, of a cold *yes* returned to a warm sentiment. One meets with it often in company; and, in most companies, with nothing else. And yet it is perhaps no great loss, upon the whole, that one's enthusiasm does not always meet with an adequate return. A disappointment of this sort, now and then, may have upon the mind an effect something like that of the cold bath upon the body; it gives a temporary shock, but is followed by a very delightful glow as soon as one gets into a society of the right temperature. They resemble too in another respect. A cool companion may be disagreeable at first, but in a little time he becomes less so; and at our first plunge we are impatient to get out of the bath, but if we stay in it a minute or two, we lose the sense of its extreme coldness. Would not your grace think, from what I am saying, or rather preaching, that I was the most social man upon earth? And yet I am become almost an hermit: I have not made four visits these four months. Not that I am running away, or have any design to run away, from the world. It is, I rather think, the world that is running away

No character was ever more fully or more concisely drawn than that of major Mercer by your grace. I was certain you would like him the more, the longer you knew him. With more learning than any other man of my acquaintance, he has all the playfulness of a schoolboy; and unites the wit and the wisdom of Montesquieu, with the sensibility of Rousseau, and the generosity of Tom Jones. Your grace has likewise a very just idea of Mrs. Mercer. She is most amiable, and well accomplished; and in goodness and generosity of nature is not inferior even to the major himself. I met her the other day, and was happy to find her in better health than I think she has been for some years. This will be most welcome news to the major. Pray, does your grace think that he blames me for not writing to him this great while? The true reason is, that I have not had this great while any news to send him, but what I knew would give him pain; and therefore I thought it better not to write, especially as we have been in daily expectation of seeing him here these several weeks. Will your grace take the trouble to tell him this? There is no man to whom I have been so much obliged; and, with one or two exceptions, there is no man or woman whom I love so well.

LETTER XXII.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Aberdeen, 5th July, 1779.

I NOW sit down to make good the threatening denounced in the conclusion of a letter which I had the honour to write to your grace about ten days ago. The request I am going to make I should preface with many apologies, if I did not know, that the personage to whom I address myself is too well acquainted with all the good emotions of the human heart to blame the warmth of a schoolboy attachment, and too generous to think the worse of me for wishing to assist an unfortunate friend.

Three weeks ago, as I was scribbling in my garret, a man entered, whom at first I did not know; but, on his desiring me to look him in the face, I soon recollected an old friend, whom I had not seen and scarcely heard of thees

twenty years. He and I lodged in the same house when we attended the school of Laurencekirk, in the year 1747. I was then about ten years old, and he about fifteen. As he took a great liking to me, he had many opportunities of obliging me; having much more knowledge of the world, as well as more bodily strength, than I. He was, besides, an ingenious mechanic, and made for me many little things: and it must not be forgotten, that he first put a violin in my hands, and gave me the only lessons in music I ever received. Four years after this period I went to college, and he engaged in farming. But our acquaintance was renewed about five years after, when I remember he made me the confidant of a passion he had for the greatest beauty in that part of the country, whom he soon after married.

I was very glad to see my old friend so unexpectedly; and we talked over many old stories, which, though interesting to us, would have given little pleasure to any body else. But my satisfaction was soon changed to regret, when, upon inquiring into the particulars of his fortune during these twenty years, I found he had been very unsuccessful. His farming projects had miscarried; and happening to give some offence to a young woman, who was called the house-keeper of a gentleman on whom he depended, she swore she would be revenged, to his ruin; and was as good as her word. He satisfied his creditors by giving them all his substance; and, retiring to a small house in Johnshaven*, made a shift to support his family by working as a joiner; a trade which, when a boy, he had picked up for his amusement. But a consumptive complaint overtook him; and, though he got the better of it, he has never since been able to do any thing that requires labour, and can now only make fiddles, and some such little matters, for which there is no great demand in the place where he lives. He told me he had come to Aberdeen on purpose to put me in mind of our old acquaintance, and see whether I could do any thing for him. I asked, in what respect he wished me to serve him. He would do any thing, he said, for his family that was not dishonourable: and, on pressing him a little further, I found

* A small fishing town in the county of Kincardine.

that the height of his ambition was to be a tide-waiter, a land-waiter, or an officer of excise. I told him, it was particularly unlucky that I had not the least influence, or even acquaintance, with any one commissioner, either of the excise or customs: but, as I did not care to discourage him, I promised to think of his case, and to do what I could. I have since seen a clergyman, who knows my friend very well, and describes his condition as still more forlorn than he had represented it.

It is in behalf of this poor man, that I now venture to implore your grace's advice and assistance. I am well aware, that though his case is very interesting to me, there is nothing extraordinary in it, and that your grace must often be solicited for others in like circumstances. It is, therefore, with the utmost reluctance that I have taken this liberty. If your grace thinks that an application from me to Mr. Baron Gordon might be sufficient to procure one of the offices in question for my friend, I would not wish you to have any trouble; but if my application were enforced by yours, it would have a better chance to succeed. This, however, I do not request, if it is not so easy to your grace as to be almost a matter of indifference.

By the first convenient opportunity I hope to send your grace a sort of curiosity—four elegant Pastorals, by a Quaker; not one of our Quakers of Scotland, but a true English Quaker, who says *thee* and *thou*, and comes into a room, and sits down in company, without taking off his hat. For all this, he is a very worthy man, an elegant scholar, a cheerful companion, and a particular friend of mine. His name is John Scott, of Amwell, near Ware, Hertfordshire, where he lives in an elegant retirement (for his fortune is very good); and has dug in a chalk-hill, near his house, one of the most curious grottos I have ever seen. As it is only twenty miles from London, I would recommend it to your grace, when you are there, as worth going to visit. Your grace will be pleased with his Pastorals, not only on account of their morality and sweet versification, but also for their images and descriptions, which are a very exact picture of the groves, woods, waters, and windmills, of that part of England where he resides.

LETTER XXIII.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Whitehall, 16th May, 1781.

I HAVE seen most of the fashionable curiosities; but will not trouble your grace with any particular account of them. The exhibition of pictures at the Royal Academy is the best of the kind I have seen. The best pieces, in my opinion, are, *Thais* (with a torch in her hand); the *Death of Dido*; and a *Boy* supposed to be listening to a wonderful story; these three by sir Joshua Reynolds: a *Shepherd Boy*, by Gainsborough; some landscapes, by Barrett. *Christ healing the Sick*, by West, is a prodigious great work, and has in it great variety of expression; but there is a glare and a hardness in the colouring, which makes it look more like a picture than like nature. Gainsborough's picture of the *King* is the strongest likeness I have ever seen; his *Queen* too is very well: but he has not given them attitudes becoming their rank; the *King* has his hat in his hand, and the *Queen* looks as if she were going to curtsy in the beginning of a minuet. Others may think differently; I give my own opinion.

There is nothing at either playhouse that is in the least captivating; nor, I think, one player, Mrs. Abingdon excepted, whom one would wish to see a second time. I was shocked at Leoni, in "*Had I a heart for falsehood*," &c. A man singing with a woman's voice sounds as unnatural to me as a woman singing with a man's. Either may do in a private company, where it is enough if people are diverted; but on a stage, where nature ought to be imitated, both are, in my opinion, intolerable.

Johnson's new "*Lives*" are published. He is, as your grace heard he would be, very severe on my poor friend Gray. His life of *Pope* is excellent; and in all his lives there is merit, as they contain a great variety of sound criticism and pleasing information. He has not done justice to lord Lyttelton. He has found means to pay me a very great compliment, for which I am much obliged to him, in speaking of Mr. Gray's journey into Scotland in 1765.

Copley's picture of Lord Chatham's Death is an exhibition of itself. It is

a vast collection of portraits, some of them very like; but, excepting three or four of the personages present, few of this vast assembly seem to be much affected with the great event; which divests the picture of its unity, and will in the next age make it cease to be interesting.

LETTER XXIV.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Hunton, near Maidstone, Kent,
14th July, 1784.

I AM now, my dear sir, arrived at a place where external nature wears a face of the most profound tranquillity; and sit down to thank you for your two last letters, which came to hand the day before I left the town. It is so far fortunate, that Mrs. B.'s removal to Mus-selburgh was attended with so little inconvenience. My confidence in your friendship and goodness entirely satisfies me that you will soon put matters on a right footing. I lament, indeed, that your attention to me and mine should give you so much trouble; but the consciousness of doing good to the unfortunate and forlorn will in part reward you; and no mind ever possessed that consciousness in a more exquisite degree than yours has reason to do.

The hot weather made London so disagreeable, that I was obliged to leave it before I had seen all my friends: I must make a longer stay when I return thither. I wish I had time and capacity to give you a description of this parsonage. It is delightfully situated about half way down a hill fronting the south, about a mile from Coxheath. My windows command a prospect extending southward about twelve miles, and from east to west not less, I suppose, than forty. In this whole space I do not see a single speck of ground that is not in the highest degree cultivated; for Coxheath is not in sight. The lawns in the neighbourhood, the hop-grounds, the rich verdure of the trees, and their endless variety, form a scenery so picturesque and so luxuriant, that it is not easy to fancy any thing finer. Add to this the cottages, churches, and villages, rising here and there among the trees, and scattered over the whole country; clumps of oaks, and other

lofty trees, disposed in ten thousand different forms, and some of them visible in the horizon at the distance of more than ten miles; and you will have some idea of the beauty of Hunton. The only thing wanting is the murmur of running water; but we have some ponds and clear pools that glitter through the trees, and have a very pleasing effect. With abundance of shade, we have no damp nor fenny ground: and though the country looks at a distance like one continued grove, the trees do not press upon us: indeed I do not at present see one that I could wish removed. There is no road within sight, the hedges that overhang the highways being very high; so that we see neither travellers nor carriages, and indeed hardly any thing in motion; which conveys such an idea of peace and quiet, as I think I never was conscious of before, and forms a most striking contrast with the endless noise and restless multitudes of Piccadilly.

But what pleases me most at Hunton is not now in view; for my friend, the bishop of Chester, is gone out a-riding. You are no stranger to the character of this amiable man. Mrs. Porteus is not less amiable. Their house is the mansion of peace, piety, and cheerfulness. The bishop has improved his parsonage and the grounds about it as much as they can be improved, and made it one of the pleasantest spots in England. The whole is bounded by a winding gravel walk, about half a mile in circumference. Close by lives a most agreeable lady, with whom we all breakfasted to-day. She is the widow of sir Roger Twisden, and, though not more than five-and-twenty, lives in this elegant retirement, and employs herself chiefly in the education of her daughter, a fine child of four years of age, who is mistress of her catechism, and reads wonderfully well. I expect soon to see our friend Mr. Langton, as the bishop proposes to send him an invitation, Rochester being only ten miles off. Tunbridge Wells is fifteen miles the other way.

FROM THE
LETTERS OF SIR WILLIAM JONES.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Jones (at the Age of Fourteen) to his Sister.

Dear sister,

WHEN I received your letter I was very concerned to hear the death of your friend Mr. Reynolds, which I consider as a piece of affliction common to us both. For although my knowledge of his name or character is of no long date, and though I never had any personal acquaintance with him, yet (as you observe) we ought to regret the loss of every honourable man; and if I had the pleasure of your conversation I would certainly give you any consolatory advice that lay in my power, and make it my business to convince you what a real share I take in your chagrin. And yet, to reason philosophically, I cannot help thinking any grief upon a person's death very superfluous, and inconsistent with sense; for what is the cause of our sorrow? Is it because we hate the person deceased? that were to imply strange contradiction, to express our joy by the common signs of sorrow. If, on the other hand, we grieve for one who was dear to us, I should reply that we should, on the contrary, rejoice at his having left a state so perilous and uncertain as life is. The common strain is, "Tis pity so virtuous a man should die:"—but I assert the contrary; and when I hear the death of a person of merit, I cannot help reflecting, how happy he must be, who now takes the reward of his excellencies without the possibility of falling away from them, and losing the virtue which he professed; on whose character death has fixed a kind of seal, and placed him out of the reach of vice and infamy; for death only closes a man's reputation, and determines it as either good or bad. On the contrary, in life nothing is certain; whilst any one is liable to alteration, we may possibly be forced to retract our esteem for him, and some time or other he may appear to us as under a different light than what he does at present; for the life of no man can be pronounced either happy or miserable, virtuous or abandoned, be-

fore the conclusion of it. It was upon this reflection that Solon, being asked by Cræsus, a monarch of immense riches, Who was the happiest man? answered, After your death I shall be able to determine. Besides, though a man should pursue a constant and determinate course of virtue, though he were to keep a regular symmetry and uniformity in his actions, and preserve the beauty of his reputation to the last, yet (while he lives) his very virtue may incur some evil imputation, and provoke a thousand murmurs of detraction; for, believe me, my dear sister, there is no instance of any virtue, or social excellence, which has not excited the envy of innumerable assailants, whose acrimony is raised barely by seeing others pleased, and by hearing commendation which another enjoys. It is not easy in this life for any man to escape censure; and infamy requires very little labour to assist its circulation. But there is a kind of sanction in the characters of the dead, which gives due force and reward to their merits, and defends them from the suggestions of calumny. But to return to the point: What reason is there to disturb yourself on this melancholy occasion? do but reflect that thousands die every moment of time; that even while we speak, some unhappy wretch or other is either pining with hunger or pinched with poverty, sometimes giving up his life to the point of the sword, torn with convulsive agonies, and undergoing many miseries which it were superfluous to mention. We should therefore compare our afflictions with those who are more miserable, and not with those who are more happy. I am ashamed to add more, lest I should seem to mistrust your prudence; but next week, when I understand your mind is more composed, I shall write you word how all things go here. I designed to write you this letter in French, but I thought I could express my thoughts with more energy in my own language.

I come now, after a long interval, to mention some more private circumstances. Pray give my duty to my mamma, and thank her for my shirts. They fit, in my opinion, very well, though Biddy says they are too little in the arms. You may expect a letter from me every day in the week till I come home; for Mrs. Biscoe has desired it,

and has given me some franks. When you see her, you may tell her that her little boy sends his duty to her, and Mr. Biscoe his love to his sister, and desires to be remembered to miss Cleeve: he also sends his compliments to my mamma and you. Upon my word, I never thought our bleak air would have so good an effect upon him. His complexion is now ruddy, which before was sallow and pale, and he is indeed much grown: but I now speak of trifles, I mean in comparison of his learning; and indeed he takes that with wonderful acuteness; besides, his excessive high spirits increase mine, and give me comfort, since, after Parnell's departure, he is almost the only company I keep. As for news, the only article I know is, that Mrs. Par is dead and buried. Mr. and Mrs. Sumner are well: the latter thanks you for bringing the letter from your old acquaintance, and the former has made me an elegant present. I am now very much taken up with study; am to speak Antony's speech in Shakspeare's *Julius Cæsar* (which play I will read to you when I come to town), and am this week to make a declamation. I add no more than the sincere well wishes of your faithful friend, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

September 7, 1769.

THE necessary trouble of correcting the first printed sheets of my history, prevented me to-day from paying a proper respect to the memory of Shakspeare, by attending his jubilee. But I was resolved to do all the honour in my power to as great a poet, and set out in the morning, in company with a friend, to visit a place where Milton spent some part of his life, and where, in all probability, he composed several of his earliest productions. It is a small village situated on a pleasant hill, about three miles from Oxford, and called Forest Hill, because it formerly lay contiguous to a forest, which has since been cut down. The poet chose this place of retirement after his first marriage, and he describes the beauties of his retreat in that fine passage of his *L'Allegro*—

Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, or hillocks green.

* * * * *

While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe;
And ev'ry shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees,
Bosom'd high in tufted trees.

* * * * *

Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks, &c.

It was neither the proper season of the year, nor time of the day, to hear all the rural sounds and see all the objects mentioned in this description; but, by a pleasing concurrence of circumstances, we were saluted, on our approach to the village, with the music of the mower and his scythe; we saw the ploughman intent upon his labour, and the milkmaid returning from her country employment.

As we ascended the hill, the variety of beautiful objects, the agreeable stillness and natural simplicity of the whole scene, gave us the highest pleasure. We at length reached the spot whence Milton undoubtedly took most of his images; it is on the top of the hill, from which there is a most extensive prospect on all sides; the distant mountains, that seemed to support the clouds, the villages and turrets, partly shaded with trees of the finest verdure, and partly raised above the groves that surrounded them, the dark plains and meadows of a greyish colour, where the sheep were feeding at large; in short, the view of the streams and rivers convinced us that there was not a single useless or idle word in the above-mentioned description, but that it was a most exact and lively representation of nature. Thus will this fine passage, which has always been admired for its elegance, receive an additional beauty from its exactness. After we had walked, with a kind of poetical enthusiasm, over this enchanted ground, we returned to the village.

The poet's house was close to the church; the greatest part of it has been pulled down, and what remains belongs

to an adjacent farm. I am informed, that several papers in Milton's own hand were found by the gentleman who was last in possession of the estate. The tradition of his having lived there is current among the villagers: one of them shewed us a ruinous wall, that made part of his chamber; and I was much pleased with another, who had forgotten the name of Milton, but recollected him by the title of The Poet.

It must not be omitted, that the groves near this village are famous for nightingales, which are so elegantly described in the *Penseroso*. Most of the cottage windows are overgrown with sweet-briars, vines, and honeysuckles; and that Milton's habitation had the same rustic ornament we may conclude from his description of the lark bidding him good-morrow,

Thro' the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:

for it is evident that he meant a sort of honeysuckle by the eglantine, though that word is commonly used for the sweet-briar, which he could not mention twice in the same couplet.

If I ever pass a month or six weeks at Oxford in the summer, I shall be inclined to hire and repair this venerable mansion, and to make a festival for a circle of friends, in honour of Milton, the most perfect scholar, as well as the sublimest poet, that our country ever produced. Such an honour will be less splendid, but more sincere and respectful, than all the pomp and ceremony on the banks of the Avon. I have, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. Jones to N. B. Halked.

Nice, March 1, 1770.

I RECEIVED your short letter with great pleasure, as it convinced me that you were not insensible of my esteem for you, and such as resemble you. I wrote immediately to my friends, as you desired, most earnestly requesting them to promote your views, as if my own interest were concerned; if they accede to my wishes in this respect they will oblige me and themselves too; for doubtless I shall be ready to make them every return that I can. I think, however, that I shall

have it in my power to serve you more effectually after my return to England; and I beg you to believe, that no inclination or efforts on my part shall ever be wanting to promote your wishes.

My health is good; but I long for those enjoyments of which I know not well how to bear the privation. When I first arrived here I was delighted with a variety of objects, rarely, if ever, seen in my own country,—olives, myrtles, vineyards, pomegranates, palms, aromatic plants, and a surprising variety of the sweetest flowers, blooming in the midst of winter. But the attraction of novelty has ceased; I am now satiated, and begin to feel somewhat of disgust. The windows of our inn are scarcely thirty paces from the sea, and, as Ovid beautifully says—

Tired, on the uniform expanse I gaze.

I have, therefore, no other resource than, with Cicero, to count the waves; or, with Archimedes and Archytas, to measure the sands. I cannot describe to you how weary I am of this place, nor my anxiety to be again at Oxford, where I might jest with you, or philosophize with Poore. If it be not inconvenient, I wish you would write to me often, for I long to know how you and our friends are: but write if you please in Latin, and with gaiety, for it grieves me to observe the uneasiness under which you appear to labour. Let me ever retain a place in your affection, as you do in mine; continue to cultivate polite literature; woo the muses; reverence philosophy; and give your days and nights to composition, with a due regard, however, to the preservation of your health.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Nicc, April 14, 1770.

It is with great pleasure that I acquaint your ladyship, that Mrs. Poyntz, lady Harriet, and her brother, are perfectly well; Mrs. Poyntz goes this morning to Villa Franca; I am to be her knight, and am just equipped to mount my Rosinante: mademoiselle Annette is to go upon lady Mary Somerset's ass; so we shall make a formidable procession. It is a delightful morning, and I hope

Mrs. Poyntz will be pleased with her jaunt. We have had very bad weather, violent rains, and storms of thunder in the night, a close sultry heat all day, and a very sharp cold every evening; but the spring seems now to be pretty well settled, and I fancy we shall have a continually clear sky, and a mild air, as long as we stay. We all promise ourselves great pleasure in our journey homewards; and we have great reason to believe it will be enchantingly pleasant. I have every day more and more reason to be pleased with the unfolding of my pupil's disposition: your ladyship will perhaps think these to be words of course, and what you might naturally expect from any other person in my situation; but, believe me, I say them upon no other motive than their truth; for if it were my nature to speak to any one what I do not think, I should at least speak truly to your ladyship, of whom I am, with the greatest truth, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

From the same to the same.

Paris, June 4, 1770.

YOUR ladyship will be surprised at receiving such a parcel of papers from me; but I am willing to make amends for not writing all last month. The truth is, I had nothing particular to say at that time; but on my arrival at Paris I found a letter from my friend Reviczki, with a very spirited ode composed by him upon the marriage of the archduchess. I dare say lord Spencer will like it, and I therefore take the liberty to inclose it for him. I have marked in this manner ③ two or three passages that are faulty; and I have put this sign ˆ to one stanza that I do not quite understand. I have also sent with it the Baron's letter to me, which will serve as a comment upon many parts of the ode. You will have heard of the shocking accidents that happened here the night of the fireworks. Above one hundred and thirty people were killed; and several people of fashion were crushed to death in their carriages. We had the good fortune to arrive here two days after this dreadful catastrophe: which perhaps has saved some of us, if not from real danger, at least from the apprehension of it. We

shall not be sorry to see England again, and hope to have that pleasure very soon. Soon after my return, I think of going to Oxford for a short time : but if lord Althorpe goes back to school this summer, as I sincerely hope he will, I shall not go to college till August ; for I am convinced that a public school has already been, and will continue to be, of the highest advantage to him in every respect. While Mrs. Poyntz staid at Lyons, I made an excursion to Geneva, in hopes of seeing Voltaire, but was disappointed. I sent him a note with a few verses, implying that the muse of tragedy had left her ancient seat in Greece and Italy, and had fixed her abode on the borders of a lake, &c. He returned this answer : “ The worst of French poets and philosophers is almost dying ; age and sickness have brought him to his last day ; he can converse with nobody, and entreats Mr. Jones to excuse and pity him. He presents him with his humble respects.” But he was not so ill as he imagined ; for he had been walking in his court, and went into his house, just as I came to it. The servants shewed me somebody at a window, who they said was he ; but I had scarce a glimpse of him. I am inclined to think that Voltaire begins to be rather serious, when he finds himself upon the brink of eternity ; and that he refuses to see company, because he cannot display his former wit and sprightliness. I find my book * is published ; I am not at all solicitous about its success ; as I did not choose the subject myself, I am not answerable for the wild extravagance of the style, nor for the faults of the original ; but if your ladyship takes the trouble to read the dissertation at the end, you may perhaps find some new and pleasing images. The work has one advantage, it is certainly authentic. Lady Georgiana is so good as to inquire how Soliman goes on ; pray tell her he is in great affliction, as he begins to suspect the innocence of Mustafa, who is just slain. To be serious ; my tragedy is just finished, and I hope to shew it to your ladyship in a short time. I am, &c.

* Translation of the Life of Nadir Shah.

LETTER XXX.

Mr. Jones to C. Reviczki.

March, 1771.

A PLAGUE on our men in office, who for six months have amused me with idle promises, which I see no prospect of their fulfilling, that they would forward my books and a letter to you ! They say, that they have not yet had an opportunity ; and that the apprehension of a Spanish war (which is now no more) furnishes them with incessant occupation. I have however so much to say to you, that I can no longer delay writing : I wish, indeed, I could communicate it in person. On my late return to England, I found myself entangled, as it were, in a variety of important considerations. My friends, companions, relations, all attacked me with urgent solicitations to banish poetry and Oriental literature for a time, and apply myself to oratory and the study of the law ; in other words, to become a barrister, and pursue the track of ambition. Their advice in truth was conformable to my own inclinations ; for the only road to the highest stations in this country is that of the law ; and I need not add, how ambitious and laborious I am. Behold me then become a lawyer, and expect in future that my correspondence will have somewhat more of public business in it. But if it ever should be my fortune to have any share in administration, you shall be my Atticus, the partner of my plans, the confidant of my secrets. Do not, however, suppose, that I have altogether renounced polite literature. I intend shortly to publish my English poems ; and I mean to bring my tragedy of Soliman on the stage, when I can find proper actors for the performance of it. I intend also composing an epic poem, on a noble subject, under the title of Britanneis : but this I must defer until I have more leisure, with some degree of independence. In the mean time, I amuse myself with the choicest of the Persian poets ; and I have the good fortune to possess many manuscripts, which I have either purchased, or borrowed from my friends, on various subjects, including history, philosophy, and some of the most celebrated poetry of Persia.

I am highly delighted with Jami's poem of Yusef and Zuleika ; it contains

somewhat more than four thousand couplets, each of which is a star of the first brilliance. We have six copies of this work at Oxford, one of which is correct; it has the vowel points, and is illustrated with the notes of Golius. I also possess a copy, which, as soon as I have leisure, I will print. Let me ask, in the mean time, how you are employed. Do you continue your occupation of elucidating your favourite Hafez? I will most willingly give all the assistance in my power to the publication of your work, if you will have it printed in London; but I scarcely think that any printer will undertake it at his own expense, unless the poems are accompanied with an English or French translation, for you cannot conceive how few English gentlemen understand Latin. Let me recommend to you, therefore, to give a literal version of Hafez in French, with annotations in the same language; and this I think will be more acceptable, even to your own countrymen, than a Latin translation; though indeed you may annex to your work such odes as you have translated into that language. The new edition of Meninski goes on tolerably well. I inclose a specimen of the new Arabic types, and earnestly beg your opinion upon them, that any defects may be corrected as soon as possible. I have had a copper-plate engraving made of one of the odes of Hafez; and may, perhaps, when my circumstances afford it, print an edition of Jami's whole poem in the same manner. A work of this kind on silken paper, would, I doubt not, be very acceptable to the governor of Bengal, and the other principal persons in India. I cannot conceive what is become of the book which I sent to you; but I will take the first opportunity of transmitting a fairer and more correct copy, together with my little Treatise on the Literature of Asia, and my Grammar of the Persian Language, which is printed with some degree of elegance; and I earnestly entreat you to tell me if any thing is wrong in it, or any thing omitted, that the next edition may be more perfect. I only wait for leisure to publish my Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry.

Do not, however, imagine that I despise the usual enjoyments of youth; no one can take more delight in singing and dancing than I do, nor in the moderate use of wine, nor in the exquisite

beauty of the ladies, of whom London affords an enchanting variety; but I prefer glory, my supreme delight, to all other gratifications, and I will pursue it through fire and water, by day and by night. Oh! my Charles (for I renounce all ceremony, and address you with ancient simplicity), what a boundless scene opens to my view! If I had two lives I should scarcely find time for the due execution for all the public and private projects which I have in mind!

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. Jones to J. Wilmot, Esq.

Univ. Coll. Oxford, 3d of June, 1779.

My dear Wilmot,
It makes me very happy to hear that my Lord Chief Justice does not retire on account of ill health, but from a motive which does him the highest honour. He will now enjoy the greatest happiness of human life, ease with dignity, after having passed through the most honourable labour without danger. I should think myself highly blessed if I could pursue a similar course in my small sphere, and after having raised a competency at the bar, could retire to the bowers of learning and the arts.

I have just begun to contemplate the stately edifice of the laws of England,—

“The gather'd wisdom of a thousand years,”—

if you will allow me to parody a line of Pope. I do not see why the study of the law is called dry and unpleasant; and I very much suspect that it seems so to those only who would think any study unpleasant which required a great application of the mind, and exertion of the memory. I have read most attentively the two first volumes of “Blackstone's Commentaries,” and the two others will require much less attention. I am much pleased with the care he takes to quote his authorities in the margin, which not only give a sanction to what he asserts, but point out the sources to which the student may apply for more diffusive knowledge. I have opened two common-place books, the one of the law, the other of oratory, which is surely too much neglected by our modern speakers. I do not mean the popular eloquence, which cannot be tolerated at the bar,

but that correctness of style and elegance of method which at once pleases and persuades the hearer. But I must lay aside my studies for about six weeks, while I am printing my Grammar, from which a good deal is expected; and which I must endeavour to make as perfect as a human work can be. When that is finished I shall attend the Court of King's Bench very constantly, and shall either take a lodging in Westminster, or accept the invitation of a friend in Duke Street, who has made me an obliging offer of apartments.

I am sorry the characters you sent me are not Persian but Chinese, which I cannot decipher without a book, which I have not at present, but *tous Chinois qu'ils sont*, I shall be able to make them out when the weather will permit me to sit in the Bodleian. In the mean time, I would advise you to inquire after a native of China, who is now in London; I cannot recollect where he lodges, but shall know when I come to town, which will be to-morrow or Saturday. I shall be at Richardson's till my Grammar is finished, unless I can buy a set of chambers in the Temple, which I fear will be difficult. I will certainly call upon you in a day or two. On one of the Indian pictures at your house there was a beautiful copy of Persian verses, which I will beg leave to transcribe, and should be glad to print it, with a translation, in the Appendix to my Grammar. I have not yet had my Persian proposals engraved; but when you write to your brother you would much oblige me by desiring him to send me a little Persian manuscript, if he can procure it without much trouble. It is a small poem which I intend to print; we have six or seven copies of it at Oxford, but if I had one in my possession it would save me the trouble of transcribing it. I have inclosed its title in Persian and English. I am very glad that your family are well. I wish them joy upon every occasion; my mother and sister desire their compliments to you, and I am, with great regard, yours, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. Jones to Mr. Hawkins.

November 5, 1771.

I SHALL ever gratefully acknowledge, dear sir, my obligations to you for the

trouble you take in inspecting my trifles. Had Dryden and other poets met with such a friend, their poems would have been more polished, and consequently more fit to see the light. Your observations are so judicious, that I wish you had not been so sparing of them. I entirely approve of all your corrections, &c.

As to the years in which the poems were written, they are certainly of no consequence to the public, but (unless it be very absurd) I would wish to specify them, for it would hurt me, as a student at the bar, to have it thought that I continue to apply myself to poetry; and I mean to insinuate, that I have given it up for several years, which I must explain more fully in the preface. For a man, who wishes to rise in the law, must be supposed to have no other object.

LETTER XXXIII.

Dr. Hunt to Mr. Jones.

Ch. Church, March 2, 1774.

Dear sir,

I RETURN you my hearty thanks for your most acceptable present of your excellent book on the Asiatic poetry. I should have made you my acknowledgments for this great favour before, but I have been so entirely engaged in reading the book (which I have done from the beginning to the end), that I have not had time to think of its worthy author, any otherwise than by tacitly admiring, as I went along, his exquisitely fine parts, and wonderful learning. Indeed, so engaging is the beautiful style of this admirable performance, and so striking the observations it contains, that it is next to impossible for a person, who has any taste for this branch of literature, when he has once taken it into his hand, to lay it aside again without giving it a thorough perusal. I find you have enriched this work with a great variety of curious quotations and judicious criticisms, as well as with the addition of several valuable new pieces, since you favoured me with the sight of it before, and the pleasure which I have now had in reading it has been in proportion. I hope this new key to the Asiatic poetry,

with which you have obliged the world, will not be suffered to rust for want of use; but that it will prove, what you intended it to be, a happy instrument in the hands of learned and inquisitive men, for unlocking the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge which have been preserved in the Hebrew, Arabic, Persic, and the other Oriental languages; and especially the Hebrew, that venerable channel, through which the sacred compositions of the divinely inspired poets have been conveyed down to us. I hope this will find you well, and am, &c.

P.S. I have seen your proposals for printing the mathematical works of my worthy friend your late father, and beg to be of the number of your subscribers.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. Jones to F. P. Bayer.

Oct. 4, 1774.

I CAN scarcely find words to express my thanks for your obliging present of a most beautiful and splendid copy of Sallust, with an elegant Spanish translation. You have bestowed upon me, a private untitled individual, an honour which hitherto has only been conferred upon great monarchs, and illustrious universities. I really was at a loss to decide whether I should begin my letter by congratulating you on having so excellent a translator, or by thanking you for this agreeable proof of your remembrance. I look forward to the increasing splendour which the arts and sciences must attain in a country, where the son of the king possesses genius and erudition capable of translating and illustrating with learned notes the first of the Roman historians. How few youths amongst the nobility in other countries possess the requisite ability or inclination for such a task! The history of Sallust is a performance of great depth, wisdom, and dignity: to understand it well is no small praise; to explain it properly is still more commendable; but to translate it elegantly, excites admiration. If all this had been accomplished by a private individual, he would have merited applause; if by a youth, he would have had a claim to literary

honours; but when to the title of youth that of Prince is added, we cannot too highly extol, or too loudly applaud, his distinguished merit.

Many years are elapsed since I applied myself to the study of your learned language, but I well remember to have read in it, with great delight, the heroic poem of Alonzo, the odes of Garcilasso, and the humorous stories of Cervantes: but I most sincerely declare, that I never perused a more elegant or polished composition than the translation of Sallust; and I readily subscribe to the opinion of the learned author in his preface, that the Spanish language approaches very nearly to the dignity of the Latin.

May the accomplished youth continue to deserve well of his country and mankind, and establish his claim to distinction above all the princes of the age! If I may be allowed to offer my sentiments, I would advise him to study most diligently the divine works of Cicero, which no man, in my opinion, ever perused without improving in eloquence and wisdom. The epistle which he wrote to his brother Quintus, on the government of a province, deserves to be daily repeated by every sovereign in the world; his books on offices, on moral ends, and the Tusculan question, merit a hundred perusals; and his orations, nearly sixty in number, deserve to be translated into every European language; nor do I scruple to affirm, that his sixteen books of letters to Atticus are superior to almost all histories, that of Sallust excepted. With respect to your own compositions, I have read with great attention, and will again read, your most agreeable book. I am informed that you propose giving a Latin translation of it, and I hope you will do it for the benefit of foreigners. I see nothing in it which requires alteration—nothing which is not entitled to praise. I much wish that you would publish more of your treatises on the antiquities of Asia and Africa. I am confident they would be most acceptable to such as study those subjects. I have only for the present to conclude, by bidding you farewell in my own name, and that of the republic of letters. Farewell.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Bath, Dec. 28, 1777.

My dear lord,

I TOLD you, when I had the pleasure of seeing you in London, that it was doubtful whether I should pass my vacation at Amsterdam or at Bath: the naiads of the hot springs have prevailed, you see, over the nymphs of the lakes, and I have been drinking the waters for a month, with no less pleasure than advantage to my health; the improvement of which I ascribe, however, in great measure, to my regular exercise on the downs, and to abstinence from any study that requires too much exertion of the mind. I should have skaited indeed in Holland from town to town, and a little voyage would have dissipated my bile, if I had any: but that scheme I must postpone till another winter, and have sent an excuse to my Dutch friend who expected me.

As I came hither entirely for the purpose of recreating my exhausted spirits and strengthening my stomach, I have abstained with some reluctance from dancing, an amusement which I am as fond of as ever, but which would be too heating for a water drinker; and as for the idler diversions of a public place, they have not the recommendation of novelty, without which they cannot long please. You, my dear friend, are in the mean time relaxing yourself, from the severer pursuits of science and civil knowledge, with the healthy and manly exercise of the field, from which you will return with a keener appetite to the noble feast which the Muses are again preparing for you at Cambridge. And here, by way of parenthesis, I must tell you, that I joined a small party of hunters the other morning, and was in at the death of a hare; but I must confess, that I think hare hunting a very dull exercise, and fit rather for a huntress than a mighty hunter, rather for Diana than Orion. Had I the taste and vigour of Actæon, without his indiscreet curiosity, my game would be the stag or the fox, and I should leave the hare in peace, without sending her to her many friends. This heresy of mine may arise from my fondness for every thing vast, and my disdain of every thing little; and for the same reason I should

prefer the more violent sport of the Asiatics, who inclose a whole district with toils, and then attack the tigers and leopards with javelins, to the sound of trumpets and clarions. Of music I conclude you have as much at Althorpe as your heart can desire; I might here have more than my ears could bear, or my mind conceive, for we have with us *La Motte*, *Fischer*, *Rauzzini*; but, as I live in the house of my old master, *Evans*, whom you remember, I am satisfied with his harp, which I prefer to the Theban lyre as much as I prefer Wales to ancient or modern Egypt.

I was this morning with *Wilkes*, who shewed me a letter lately written to him from Paris, by *Diderot*; as I have, you know, a quick memory, I brought away the substance of it, and give it to you in a translation almost literal. "Friend *Wilkes*, it delights me to hear that you still have sufficient employment for your active mind, without which you cannot long be happy. I have just read the several speeches, which you have delivered on the subject of your present war against the provincials; they are full of eloquence, force, and dignity. I too have composed a speech on the same subject, which I would deliver in your senate, had I a seat in it. 'I will wave for the present, my countrymen, all considerations of the justice or injustice of the measures you are pursuing; I well know that to be an improper topic at the time when the public welfare is immediately concerned. I will not even question at present your power to reduce an exasperated and desperate people; but consider, I entreat you, that you are surrounded by nations by whom you are detested; and say, for Heaven's sake, how long you will give them reason to laugh at the ridiculous figure you are making.' This is my harangue; it is short in words, but extensive in meaning." So far, my dear lord, we have no reason to censure the thoughts or expressions of the learned *Encyclopedist*: what follows is so profligate, that I would not transcribe it, if I were not sure that you would join with me in condemning it. "As to yourself," he adds, "be cheerful, drink the best wines; keep the gayest company; and, should you be inclined to a tender passion, address yourself to such women

as make the least resistance ; they are as amusing and as interesting as others. One lives with them without anxiety, and quits them without regret." I want words, Diderot, to express the baseness, the folly, the brutality of this sentiment. I am no cynic, but as fond as any man at Paris of cheerful company, and of such pleasures as a man of virtue need not blush to enjoy ; but if the philosophy of the French academicians be comprised in your advice to your friend Wilkes, keep it to yourself, and to such as you. I am of a different sect. He concludes his letter with some professions of regard, and with a recommendation of a young Frenchman, who told Wilkes some speeches of Diderot to the empress of Russia, which you shall hear at some other time. I am interrupted, and must leave you with reluctance till the morning.

LETTER XXXVI.

Edmund Burke to Mr. Jones.

March 12, 1779.

My dear sir,

I GIVE you many thanks for your most obliging and valuable present, and feel myself extremely honoured by this mark of your friendship. My first leisure will be employed in an attentive perusal of an author, who had merit enough to fill up a part of yours, and whom you have made accessible to me with an ease and advantage, which one so many years disused to Greek literature as I have been, could not otherwise have. Isæus is an author of whom I know nothing but by fame : I am sure that any idea I had from thence conceived of him will not be at all lessened by seeing him in your translation. I do not know how it has happened, that orators have hitherto fared worse in the hands of the translators than even the poets ; I never could bear to read a translation of Cicero. Demosthenes suffers I think somewhat less ; but he suffers greatly ; so much, that I must say, that no English reader could well conceive from whence he had acquired the reputation of the first of orators. I am satisfied that there is now an eminent exception to this rule, and I sincerely congratulate the public on that

acquisition. I am, with the greatest truth and regard, my dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Oct. 13, 1778.

My dear lord, captain, and friend (of all which titles no man entertains a juster idea than yourself), how shall I express the delight which your letter from Warley camp has given me ! I cannot sufficiently regret, that I was so long deprived of that pleasure ; for, intending to be in London soon after the circuit, I had neglected to leave any directions here about my letters ; so that yours has lain almost a month upon my table, where I found it yesterday on my return from the country. I ought indeed to have written first to you, because I was a rambler, you stationary ; and because the pen has been my peculiar instrument, as the sword has been yours, this summer ; but the agitation of forensic business, and the sort of society in which I have been forced to live, afforded me few moments of leisure, except those in which nature calls for perfect repose, and the spirits exhausted with fatigue require immediate reparation. I rejoice to see that you are a votary, as Archilocus says of himself, both of the Muses and of Mars ; nor do I believe, that a letter full of more manly sentiments, or written with more unaffected elegance, than yours, has often been sent from a camp. You know I have set my mind on your being a fine speaker in next parliament, in the cause of true constitutional liberty, and your letters convince me that I shall not be disappointed. To this great object, both for your own glory and your country's good, your present military station will contribute not a little : for a soldier's life naturally inspires a certain spirit and confidence, without which the finest elocution will not have a full effect. Not to mention Pericles, Xenophon, Cæsar, and a hundred other eloquent soldiers among the ancients, I am persuaded that Pitt (whom by the way I am far from comparing to Pericles) acquired his forcible manner in the field where he carried the colours. This I mention in addition to the advan-

tages of your present situation, which you very justly point out: nor can I think your summer in any respect uselessly spent, since our constitution has a good defence in a well-regulated militia, officered by men who love their country: and a militia so regulated may in due time be the means of thinning the formidable standing army, if not of extinguishing it. Captain *** is one of the worthiest as well as tallest men in the kingdom; but he, and his Socrates, Dr. Johnson, have such prejudices in politics, that one must be upon one's guard in their company, if one wishes to preserve their good opinion. By the way, the dean of Gloucester has printed a work, which he thinks a full confutation of "Locke's Theory of Government;" and his second volume will contain a new theory of his own; of this when we meet. The disappointment to which you allude, and concerning which you say so many friendly things to me, is not yet certain. My competitor is not yet named; many doubt whether he will be: I think he will not, unless the chancellor should press it strongly. It is still the opinion and wish of the bar, that I should be the man. I believe the minister hardly knows his own mind. I cannot legally be appointed till January, or next month at soonest, because I am not a barrister of five years' standing till that time: now many believe that they keep the place open for me till I am qualified. I certainly wish to have it, because I wish to have twenty thousand pounds in my pocket before I am eight-and-thirty years old; and then I might contribute in some little degree towards the service of my country in parliament, as well as at the bar, without selling my liberty to a patron, as too many of my profession are not ashamed of doing; and I might be a speaker in the house of commons in the full vigour and maturity of my age; whereas, in the slow career of Westminster Hall, I should not perhaps, even with the best success, acquire the same independent station till the age at which Cicero was killed. But be assured, my dear lord, that if the minister be offended at the style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak, of public affairs, and on that account should refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence, without a debt or a

care of any kind. I will not break in upon you at Warley unexpectedly; but whenever you find it most convenient, let me know, and I will be with you in less than two hours.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Temple, Feb. 4, 1780.

THE public piety having given me this afternoon what I rarely can obtain, a short intermission of business, can I employ my leisure more agreeably than in writing to my friend? I shall send my letter at random, not knowing whether you are at Althorpe or at Buckingham, but persuading myself that it will find you without much delay. May I congratulate you and our country on your entrance upon the great career of public life? If there ever was a time when men of spirit, sense, and virtue, ought to stand forth, it is the present. I am informed, that you have attended some county meetings, and are on some committees. Did you find it necessary or convenient to speak on the state of the nation? It is a noble subject, and, with your knowledge as well as judgment, you will easily acquire habits of eloquence; but *habits* they are, no less than playing on a musical instrument, or handling a pencil: and as the best musicians and finest painters began with playing sometimes out of tune, and drawing out of proportion, so the greatest orators must begin with leaving some periods unfinished, and perhaps with sitting down in the middle of a sentence. It is only by continued use, that a speaker learns to express his ideas with precision and soundness, and to provide at the beginning of a period for the conclusion of it; but to this facility of speaking the habit of writing rapidly contributes in a wonderful degree. I would particularly impress this truth upon your mind, my dear friend, because I am fully convinced, that an Englishman's real importance in his country will always be in a compound ratio of his virtue, his knowledge, and his eloquence; without all of which qualities little real utility can result from either of them apart; and I am no less persuaded, that a virtuous and knowing man, who has no

natural impediment, may by habit acquire perfect eloquence, as certainly as a healthy man, who has the use of his muscles, may learn to swim or to skate. When shall we meet, and where, that we may talk over these and other matters? There are some topics, which will be more properly discussed in conversation than upon paper, I mean on account of their copiousness; for, believe me, I should not be concerned if all that I write were copied at the post-office, and read before the king in council. * * * * *

At the same time I solemnly declare, that I will not enlist under the banners of a party: a declaration which is, I believe, useless, because no party would receive a man, determined as I am to think for himself. To you alone, my friend, and to your interests, I am firmly attached, both from early habit and from mature reason; from ancient affection unchanged for a single moment, and from a full conviction, that such affection was well placed. The views and wishes of all other men I will analyse and weigh with that suspicion and slowness of belief, which my experience, such as it is, has taught me; and to be more particular, although I will be jealous of the *regal* part of our constitution, and always lend an arm towards restraining its proud waves within due limits, yet my most vigilant and strenuous efforts shall be directed against any oligarchy that may rise: being convinced, that on the popular part of every government depends its real force, the obligation of its laws, its welfare, its security, its permanence. I have been led insensibly to write more seriously than I had intended; my letters shall not always be so dull; but with so many public causes of grief or of resentment, who can at all times be gay?

LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. Jones to the Rev. E. Cartwright.

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, May 16, 1780.

Dear sir,

SINCE my friends have declared me a candidate for the very honourable seat which sir Roger Newdigate intends to vacate, I have received many flattering testimonies of regard from several respectable persons; but your letter, dated

May 8th, which I did not receive till this morning, is, without a compliment, the fairest and most pleasing fruit of the competition in which I am engaged. The rule of the University, which is a very noble one, forbidding me to solicit votes for myself, I have not been at liberty even to apply to many persons whom it is both a pleasure and honour to know. Your unsolicited approbation is a great reward of my past toil in my literary career, and no small incentive to future exertions. As to my integrity, of which you are pleased to express a good opinion, it has not yet been tried by any very strong temptations; I hope it will resist them if any be thrown in my way. This only I may say (and I think without a boast), that my ambition was always very much bounded, and that my views are already attained by professional success adequate to my highest expectations. Perhaps I shall not be thought very unambitious if I add, that my great object of imitation is Mr. Selden; and that if I could obtain the same honour which was conferred on him, I should, like him, devote the rest of my life to the service of my constituents and my country, to the practice of an useful profession, and to the unremitted study of our English laws, history, and literature. To be approved by you, and such men as you (if many such could be found), would be a sufficient reward to, &c.

P. S. Permit me to add an ode printed (but not published) before the present competition, and at a time when I should have been certainly made a judge in India, by the kindness of lord North, if any appointment had taken place. It proves sufficiently, that no views or connections can prevent me from declaring my honest sentiments, when I think they may be useful to my country.

LETTER XL.

Mr. Jones to Dr. Wheeler.

September 2, 1780.

My dear sir,
THE parliament being suddenly dissolved, I must beg you, as one of my best and truest friends, to make it known in the University, that I decline giving the

learned body any further trouble, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them. It is needless to add, what you well know, that I should never have been the first to have troubled them at all. I always thought a delegation to parliament from so respectable a society a laudable object of true ambition; but I considered it as a distant object, as a reward of long labour and meritorious service in our country; and I conceived, that had I filled a judge's seat in India, with the approbation of my countrymen, I might, on my return, be fixed on as a proper representative of the University. Had not that happened, which you know, I should no more have thought of standing now, than of asking for a peerage. As to principles in politics, if my success at Oxford, at any future time, depend upon a change of them, my cause is hopeless: I cannot alter or conceal them, without abandoning either my reason or my integrity; the first of which is my only guide, and the second my chief comfort in this passage through life. Were I inclined to boast of any thing, I should certainly boast of making those principles my rule of conduct, which I learned from the best of men in ancient and modern times; and which, my reason tells me, are conducive to the happiness of mankind. As to *men*, I am certainly not hostile to the *ministers*, from whom I have received obligations; but I cannot in conscience approve their *measures*.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. Jones to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

November 23, 1780.

My lord,

HAD I not been prevented by particular business from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our club*. The election was of course

* Generally known by the name of the *Turk's Head Club*, held in Gerrard Street, Soho. The establishment of this club was first proposed by sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the original members of it were the friends of these three. The number of members was gra-

unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that lord Camden and the bishop of Chester* were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honour us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary that we should ever reject such an offer; but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our club I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information; and I trust, that as the honour will be ours, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company, once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends as those of your lordship and lord Althorpe. I spoke yesterday in Westminster Hall for two hours and a half on a knotty point of law, and this morning for above an hour, on a very interesting public question; to-morrow I must argue a great cause, and am therefore obliged to conclude with assuring your lordship, that I am, with the highest, &c.

LETTER XLII.

The Bishop of St. Asaph † to Mr. Jones.

Nov. 3, 1781.

Dear sir,

A LETTER from you is always welcome, come sooner or later; yet I cannot help rejoicing at that ceaseless hurry of business, which occasioned your delay in writing, and made me lose a very valuable visit. Riches and reputation, after shewing a little coyness at first, are now making their advances at a very great rate, and will soon be as lavish of their charms as you could wish; yet I know you think too liberally to let either your friends or your liberty suffer by their engrossing you too much.

I thank you for the nuptial ode, which,

dually increased to forty, comprehending men of the most distinguished characters, and eminent for their learning, talents, and abilities.

* Dr. Porteus.

† Dr. Shipley.

notwithstanding its incorrectness, which you need not complain of, is the most genuine imitation of Pindar I have ever seen. I don't know whether I can assent to your criticism on the word *replete*, that it is never used in a good sense. Were it left to me, I would use it in no sense. It has but little meaning. It was never naturalized in conversation or in prose, and I think makes no figure in verse.

I have another present of value to thank you for—"your 'Essay on the Law of Bailments.'" To own the truth, your name to the advertisement made me impatient, and I had sent for it and read it before. It appears to me to be clear, just, and accurate; I mean as clear as the subject will permit. My want of law language, and perhaps of a legal understanding, made me feel great difficulty in following you through your very ingenious distinctions and consequences, of which I thought I could perceive the solidity. I foretel, that this will be your last work. For the future your business and the public will allow you to write no more.

Though I fear it will not be consistent with your employment in Westminster Hall, I cannot help telling you, that for as many days as you can spare between this time and the meeting of parliament, you will find a warm bed and a hearty welcome at Chilbolton. Mrs. Shipley and her daughters desire their compliments, and join in the invitation. I am, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Jan. 5, 1782.

O La bella cosa il far niente! This was my exclamation, my dear lord, on the 12th of last month, when I found myself, as I thought, at liberty to be a rambler, or an idler, or any thing I pleased; but my *mal di gola* took ample revenge for my abuse and contempt of it, when I wrote to you, by confining me twelve days with a fever and quinsey; and I am now so cramped by the approaching session at Oxford, that I cannot make any long excursion. I inclose my tragical song of "A shepherdess going," with Mazzanti's music, of which my opinion at present is, that the modulation is very

artificial, and the harmony good, but that Pergolesi (whom the modern Italians are such puppies as to undervalue) would have made it more pathetic and *heart-rending*, if I may compose such word. I long to hear it sung by Mrs. Poyntz. Pray present the inclosed, in my name, to lady Althorpe. I hope that I shall in a short time be able to think of you, when I read these charming lines of Catullus*:

"And soon, to be completely blest,
Soon may a young Torquatus rise;
Who, hanging on his mother's breast,
To his known sire shall turn his eyes,
Outstretch his infant arms awhile,
Half ope his little lips, and smile."

Printed Translation.

What a beautiful picture! Can Dominichino equal it? How weak are all arts in comparison of poetry and rhetoric! Instead however of *Torquatus*, I would read *Spencerus*. Do you not think, that I have discovered the true use of the fine arts, namely, in relaxing the mind after toil? Man was born for *labour*; his configuration, his passions, his restlessness, all prove it; but labour would wear him out, and the purpose of it be defeated, if he had not intervals of *pleasure*; and unless that pleasure be *innocent*, both he and society must suffer. Now what pleasures are more harmless, if they be nothing else, than those afforded by polite arts and polite literature? Love was given us by the Author of our being as the reward of virtue, and the solace of care; but the base and sordid forms of *artificial* (which I oppose to *natural*) society in which we live, have encircled that heavenly rose with so many thorns, that the wealthy alone can gather it with prudence. On the other hand, mere pleasure, to which the idle are not justly entitled, soon satiates, and leaves a vacuity in the mind more unpleasant than actual pain. A just mixture, or interchange of labour and pleasure, appears alone conducive to such happiness as this life affords. Farewell. I have no room to add my useless name, and still more useless professions of friendship.

* The original is quoted by Mr. Jones:—
Torquatus volo parvulus,
Matris è gremio suæ
Porrigens teneras manus,
Dulce rideat ad patrem.
Semi-hiante labello.

LETTER XLIV.

Mr. Jones to Mr. Thomas Yeates.

Lamb's Buildings, April 25, 1782.

Sir,

It was not till within these very few days that I received, on my return from the circuit, your obliging letter, dated the 18th of March, which, had I been so fortunate as to have received earlier, I should have made a point of answering immediately. The society for constitutional information, by electing me one of their members, will confer upon me an honour which I am wholly unconscious of deserving, but which is so flattering to me, that I accept of their offer with pleasure and gratitude. I should indeed long ago have testified my regard for so useful an institution by an offer of my humble service in promoting it, if I had not really despaired, in my present situation, of being able to attend your meetings as often as I should ardently wish.

My future life shall certainly be devoted to the support of that excellent constitution, which it is the object of your society to unfold and elucidate; and from this resolution, long and deliberately made, no prospects, no connection, no station here or abroad, no fear of danger, or hope of advantage to myself, shall ever deter or allure me.

A form of government so apparently conducive to the true happiness of the community, must be admired as soon as it is understood; and, if reason and virtue have any influence in human breasts, ought to be preserved by any exertions, and at any hazard. Care must now be taken, lest, by reducing the regal power to its just level, we raise the aristocratical to a dangerous height; since it is from the people that we can deduce the obligation of our laws, and the authority of magistrates.

On the people depend the welfare, the security, and the permanence of every legal government; in the people must reside all substantial power; and to the people must all those, in whose ability and knowledge we sometimes wisely, often imprudently, confide, be always accountable for the due exercise of that power with which they are for a time entrusted.

If the properties of all good government be considered as duly distributed

in the different parts of our limited republic, goodness ought to be the distinguished attribute of the crown, wisdom of the aristocracy, but power and fortitude of the people.

May justice and humanity prevail in them all!

I am, &c.

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Jones to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

Wimbledon Park, Sept. 13, 1782.

My lord,

If your lordship received my letter from Calais, you will not be much surprised to see the date of this, and the place where I now am writing, while lady Spencer is making morning visits. Mr. and Mrs. Poyntz have this instant left us. Lord Althorpe being in Northamptonshire, I must give myself some consolation for my disappointment in missing him, by scribbling a few lines to him as soon as I have finished these with which I now trouble your lordship. My excursion to the United Provinces (which has been the substitute for my intended expedition to the United States) was extremely pleasing and improving to me. I returned last Monday, and, finding all my friends dispersed in various parts of England, am going for a few days into Buckinghamshire, whence I shall go to Oxford, and must continue there till the sessions. Should your lordship be in Hampshire any time in October, and should it be in all respects convenient to you, I will accept this year, with great pleasure, the obliging invitation to Chilbolton, which I was unfortunately prevented from accepting last year. I lament the unhappy dissensions among our great men, and clearly see the vanity of my anxious wish, that they would have played in tune some time longer in the political concert.

The delays about the India judgeship have, it is true, greatly injured me; but, with my patience and assiduity, I could easily recover my lost ground. I must, however, take the liberty here to allude to a most obliging letter of your lordship from Chilbolton, which I received so long ago as last November, but was prevented from answering till you came to town. It was inexpressibly flattering to me; but

my intimate knowledge of the nature of my profession obliges me to assure you, that it requires the *whole man*, and admits of no concurrent pursuits; that, consequently, I must either give it up, or it will engross me so much, that I shall not for some years be *able to enjoy the society of my friends, or the sweets of liberty*. Whether it be a wise part to live uncomfortably, in order to die wealthy, is another question; but this I know by experience, and have heard old practitioners make the same observation, that a lawyer, who is in earnest, must be chained to his chambers and the bar for ten or twelve years together. In regard to your lordship's indulgent and flattering prediction, that my "*Essay on Bailment*" would be my last work, and that, for the future, business and the public would allow me to write no more; I doubt whether it will be accomplished, whatever may be my practice or situation; for I have already prepared many tracts on jurisprudence; and when I see the volumes written by lord Coke, whose annual gains were twelve or fourteen thousand pounds, by lord Bacon, sir Matthew Hale, and a number of judges and chancellors, I cannot think that I should be hurt in my professional career, by publishing now and then a law tract upon some interesting branch of the science; and the science itself is indeed so complex, that, without *writing*, which is *the chain of memory*, it is impossible to remember a thousandth part of what we read or hear. Since it is my wish therefore to become in time as great a lawyer as Sulpicius, I shall probably leave as many volumes of my works as he is said to have written. As to politics, I begin to think, that the natural propensity of men to dissent from one another, will prevent them, in a corrupt age, from uniting in any laudable design; and at present I have nothing to do but to *rest on my oars*, which the Greek philosophers, I believe, called *ἐπέχειν*, a word which Cicero applies in one of his letters to the same subject.

My best respects to the ladies, for whom I would certainly have brought some Virginia nightingales, if my western expedition had taken place, since I was informed by the captain, with whom I should have sailed, that they might have been kept in the cabin without any danger.

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Chilbolton, Oct. 21, 1782.

Madam,

THOUGH I wrote so lately to your ladyship, and cannot hope by any thing I can now say to make amends for the dulness of my last letter; yet, as some of the ladies here are this moment writing to St. James's Place, I cannot prevail on myself to decline joining so agreeable a party, especially as the very favourable accounts which were last night received of lord Spencer's health have given me spirits, and made me eager to offer my sincere congratulations. Yes; I rejoice with the truest sincerity, that his lordship's health is so likely to be re-established; for I cannot name a man of rank in the nation, in whose health the public and all mankind, as well as his family and friends, are more truly interested. I have passed my time at Chilbolton so agreeably, that ten days have appeared like one: and it gives me concern, that the near approach of the term will oblige me to leave so charming and improving a society at the end of this week; after which I shall hope to find my friends at Midgham in perfect health; and then farewell, a long farewell to all my rational and interesting pleasures, which must be succeeded by the drudgery of drawing bills in equity, the toil of answering cases, the squabbles of the bar, and the more vexatious dissensions and conflicts of the political world, which I vainly deprecated, and now as vainly deplore. How happy would it be if statesmen had more *music in their souls*, and could bring themselves to consider, that what harmony is in a concert, such is union in a state; but in the great orchestra of politics, I find so many musicians out of humour, and instruments out of tune, that I am more tormented by such dissonance than the man in Hogarth's print, and am more desirous than ever of being transported to the distance of five thousand leagues from all this fatal discord. Without a metaphor, I lament with anguish the bitterness and animosity with which some of my friends have been assailing others; as if empty altercation could be the means of procuring any good to this afflicted country. I find myself, in more instances than one,

like poor Petrarch, wishing to pass my days

*Fra' magnanimi pochi; à chi'l ben piace,
Di lor chi m' assecura?
Io vo gridando pace, pace, pace.*

—but I shall not be heard, and must console myself with the pleasing hope, that your ladyship, and the few friends of virtue and humanity, will agree in this sentiment with, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

Sir William Jones to Lord Ashburton.

April 27, 1783.

YOUR kind letter found me on board the Crocodile: I should have been very unhappy had it missed me, since I have long habituated myself to set the highest value on every word you speak, and every line you write. Of the two inclosed letters to our friends, Impey and Chambers, I will take the greatest care, and will punctually follow your directions as to the first of them. My departure was sudden indeed; but the Admiralty were so anxious for the sailing of this frigate, and their orders were so peremptory, that it was impossible to wait for any thing but a breeze. Our voyage has hitherto been tolerably pleasant, and, since we left the Channel, very quick. We begin to see albicores about the ship, and to perceive an agreeable change of climate. Our days, though short, give me ample time for study, recreation, and exercise; but my joy and delight proceed from the surprising health and spirits of Anna Maria, who joins me in affectionate remembrance to lady Ashburton. As to you, my dear lord, we consider you as the spring and fountain of our happiness, as the author and parent (a Roman would have added, what the coldness of our northern language will hardly admit, the *god*) of our fortunes. It is possible indeed, that by incessant labour and irksome attendance at the bar, I might in due time have attained all that my very limited ambition could aspire to; but in no other station than that which I owe to your friendship, could I have gratified at once my boundless curiosity concerning the people of the East, continued the exercise of my profession, in which I sincerely delight, and enjoyed at

the same time the comforts of domestic life. The grand jury of Denbighshire have found, I understand, the bill against the dean of St. Asaph, for publishing my dialogue; but as an indictment for a theoretical essay on government was, I believe, never before known, I have no apprehension for the consequences. As to the doctrines in the tract, though I shall certainly not preach them to the Indians, who must and will be governed by absolute power, yet I shall go through life with a persuasion, that they are just and rational; that substantial freedom is both the daughter and parent of virtue; and that virtue is the only source of public and private felicity. Farewell.

LETTER XLVIII.

Sir William Jones to Dr. Patrick Russel.

Calcutta, March 10, 1784.

YOU would readily excuse my delay in answering your obliging letter, if you could form an idea of the incessant hurry and confusion, in which I have been kept ever since my arrival in Bengal, by necessary business, or necessary formalities, and by the difficulty of settling myself to my mind, in a country so different from that which I have left. I am indeed, at best, but a bad correspondent; for I never write by candle-light; and find so much Arabic or Persian to read, that all my leisure in a morning is hardly sufficient for a thousandth part of the reading that would be highly agreeable and useful to me; and as I purpose to spend the long vacation up the country, I wish to be a match in conversation with the learned natives, whom I may happen to meet.

I rejoice that you are so near, but lament that you are not nearer; and am not without hope, that you may one day be tempted to visit Bengal, where I flatter myself you will give me as much of your company as possible.

Many thanks for your kind hints in regard to my health. As to me, I do not expect, as long as I stay in India, to be free from a bad digestion, the morbus literatorum, for which there is hardly any remedy, but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride; my diet is light and sparing, and I

go early to rest; yet the activity of my mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm, and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health. If you should meet with any curiosities on the coast, either in your botanical rambles or in reading, and will communicate them to our society, lately instituted for inquiring into the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, we shall give you our hearty thanks. There is an Abyssinian here, who knew Mr. Bruce, at Gwender. I have examined him, and he confirms Bruce's account. Every day supplies me with something new in Oriental learning; and if I were to stay here half a century, I should be continually amused.

LETTER XLIX.

Sir William Jones to ———.

April 13, 1784.

* * * * *

I AM discouraged from writing to you as copiously as I wish, by the fear that my letter may never reach you. I inclose however a hymn to the Indian Cupid, which is here said to be the only correct specimen of Hindu mythology that has appeared; it is certainly new, and quite original, except the form of the stanza, which is Milton's. I add the character of lord Ashburton, which my zeal for his fame prompted me to publish.

* * * * *

Had I dreamt that the dialogue would have made such a stir, I should certainly have taken more pains with it. I will never cease to avow and justify the doctrine comprised in it. I meant it merely as an imitation of one of Plato's, where a boy, wholly ignorant of geometry, is made by a few simple questions to demonstrate a proposition; and I intended to inculcate, that the principles of government were so obvious and intelligible, that a clown might be brought to understand them. As to raising sedition, I as much thought of raising a church.

My dialogue contains my system, which I have ever avowed, and ever will avow; but I perfectly agree (and no man of sound intellect can disagree) that such a system is wholly inapplicable to this country, where millions of men are so

wedded to inveterate prejudices and habits, that, if liberty could be forced upon them by Britain, it would make them as miserable as the cruellest despotism.

Pray remember me affectionately to all my friends at the bar, whom I have not time to enumerate; and assure my academical and professional friends, that I will write to them all when I have leisure. Farewell, &c.

LETTER L.

Sir Wm. Jones to Charles Chapman, Esq.

Gardens, near Allipore, April 26, 1784.

ALLOW me, dear sir, to give you the warmest thanks, in my own name, and in that of our infant society, for the pleasure which we have received from your interesting account of Cochin China, with considerable extracts from which we have been favoured by our patrons. Our meetings are well attended, and the society may really be said, considering the recent time of its establishment, to flourish.

We have been rather indisposed, the weather being such as we had no idea of in England, excessive heat at noon, and an incessant high wind from morning to night; at this moment it blows a hurricane, and my study reminds me of my cabin at sea. Our way of life however is quite pastoral in this retired spot; as my prime favourites, among all our pets, are two large English sheep, which came with us from Spithead, and, having narrowly escaped the knife, are to live as long and as happily with us as they can; they follow us for bread, and are perfectly domestic. We are literally lulled to sleep by Persian nightingales; and cease to wonder, that the Bulbul, with a *thousand tales*, makes such a figure in Oriental poetry. Since I am resolved to sit regularly in court as long as I am well, not knowing how soon I may be forced to remit my attention to business, I shall not be at liberty to enter my budgerow till near the end of July, and must be again in Calcutta on the 22d of October, so that my time will be very limited; and I shall wish if possible to see Benares.

LETTER LI.

Sir William Jones to Miss E. Shipley.

On the Ganges, Sept. 7, 1786.

You do too much honour, my dear madam, to my compositions; they amuse me in the few hours of leisure that my business allows, and if they amuse my friends, I am amply rewarded.

*Mà si 'l Latino e 'l Greco
Parlan di me dopo la morte, è un vento;
Ond' io, perche pavento
Aduna sempre quel ch' un ora sgombre,
Vorrei 'l vero abbracciar lassando l'ombra.*

We talk of the year 1790, as the happy limit of our residence in this unpropitious climate; but this must be a family secret, lest application should be made for my place, and I should be shoved out before my resignation. God grant that the bad state of my Anna's health may not compel her to leave India before me; I should remain like a man with a dead palsy on one of his sides; but it were better to lose one side for a time, than both for ever. I do not mean that she has been, or is likely to be, in danger from her complaints. I have proposed a visit to her friend, lady Campbell, and she seemed to receive the proposal with pleasure; the sea air, and change of scene at a proper season, may do more than all the faculty, with all their prescriptions. As to politics and ministers, let me whisper another secret in your ear:

Io non credo piu al nero ch' all' azzurro;

and, as to coalitions, if the *nero* be mixed with the *azzurro*, they will only make a dirtier colour. India is yet secure, and improveable beyond imagination; it is not, however, in such a state of security, but that wise politicians may, with strong well-timed exertions and well-applied address, contrive to lose it. The discharge of my duty, and the study of Indian laws in their original languages (which is no inconsiderable part of my duty), are an excuse for my neglect of writing letters; and indeed I find, by experience, that I can take up my pen for that purpose but once a year, and I have a hundred unanswered letters now lying before me; but my Anna, who is my secretary of state, and first, or rather *sole*, lady of the treasury, has written volumes. Loves and regards to all who love and

regard us; as to compliments, they are unmeaning things, and neither become me to send, nor you to convey. I am, &c.

LETTER LII.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

June 24.

* * * * *
* * * I AM well, rising constantly between three and four, and usually walking two or three miles before sun-rise; my wife is tolerably well; and we only lament that the damp weather will soon oblige us to leave our herds and flocks, and all our rural delights, on the banks of the Baghiratti. The business of the court will continue at least two months longer, after which I purpose to take a house at Bandell, or Hugli, and pass my autumnal vacation, as usual, with the Hindu bards. I have read your pundit's curious book twice in Sanscrit, and will have it elegantly copied: the *Dabistan*, also, I have read through twice with great attention; and both copies are ready to be returned, as you shall direct. Mr. R. Johnston thinks he has a young friend who will translate the *Dabistan*; and the greatest part of it would be very interesting to a curious reader, but some of it cannot be translated. It contains more recondite learning, more entertaining history, more beautiful specimens of poetry, more ingenuity and wit, more indecency and blasphemy, than I ever saw collected in a single volume: the two last are not the author's, but are introduced in the chapters on the heretics and infidels of India. On the whole, it is the most amusing and instructive book I ever read in Persian.

I hear nothing from Europe but what all the papers contain; and that is enough to make me rejoice exceedingly that I am in Asia. Those with whom I have spent some of my happiest hours, and hope to spend many more on my return to England, are tearing one another to pieces, with the enmity, that is proverbial here, of the snake and the ichneumon. I have nothing left, therefore, but to wish what is right and just may prevail, to discharge my public duties with unremitted attention, and to recreate myself at leisure with the literature of this interesting country.

LETTER LIII.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

Chrisbna-nagur, Aug. 15, 1786.

I THANK you heartily, my dear sir, for the tender strains of the unfortunate Charlotte*, which have given us pleasure and pain; the sonnets which relate to herself are incomparably the best. Petrarcha is little known; his sonnets, especially the first book, are the least valuable of his works, and contain less natural sentiments than those of the swan of Avon; but his odes, which are political, are equal to the lyric poems of the Greeks; and his triumphs are in a triumphant strain of sublimity and magnificence. Anna Maria gives you many thanks for the pleasure you have procured her. We are in love with this pastoral cottage; but though these three months are called a vacation, yet I have no vacant hours. It rarely happens that favourite studies are closely connected with the strict discharge of our duty, as mine happily are; even in this cottage I am assisting the court, by studying Arabic and Sanscrit, and have now rendered it an impossibility for the Mohammedan or Hindu lawyers to impose upon us with erroneous opinions.

This brings to my mind your honest pundit Rhadacaunt, who refused, I hear, the office of pundit to the court, and told Mr. Hastings, that he would not accept of it if the salary were doubled; his scruples were probably religious; but they would put it out of my power to serve him, should the office again be vacant. His unvarnished tale I would have repeated to you, if we had not missed one another on the river; but since I despair of seeing you until my return to Calcutta, at the end of October, I will set it down here, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words:—

“My father (said he) died at the age of a hundred years, and my mother, who was eighty years old, became a *sati*, and burned herself to expiate sins. They left me little besides good principles. Mr. Hastings purchased for me a piece of land, which at first yielded twelve hundred rupees a year; but lately, either through my inattention or through accident, it has produced only one thou-

sand. This would be sufficient for me and my family; but the duty of Brahmans is not only to teach the youths of their sect, but to relieve those who are poor. I made many presents to poor scholars and others in distress, and for this purpose I anticipated my income: I was then obliged to borrow for my family expenses, and I now owe about three thousand rupees. This debt is my only cause of uneasiness in this world; I would have mentioned it to Mr. Shore, but I was ashamed.”

Now the question is, how he can be set upon his legs again, when I hope he will be more prudent. If Bahman* should return to Persia, I can afford to give him one hundred rupees a month, till his debt shall be discharged out of his rents; but at present I pay more in salaries to my native scholars than I can well afford; nevertheless I will cheerfully join you in any mode of clearing the honest man, that can be suggested; and I should assist him merely for his own sake, as I have more Brahmanical teachers than I can find time to hear.

I send you not an elegant pathetic sonnet, but the wildest and strangest poem that was ever written, Khakani's complaint in prison. The whole is a menace, that he would change his religion, and seek protection among the Christians, or the Gabres. It contains one or two proper names, of which I find no full explanation, even in a commentary professedly written to illustrate the poem. The fire of Khakani's genius blazes through the smoke of his erudition; the measure of the poem, which will enable you to correct the errors of the copies, is

U — — — | U — — — | U — —
 U — — — | U — — — | U — —

with a strong accent on the last syllable of each foot. Adieu, my dear sir, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Sir Wm. Jones to Thomas Caldicott, Esq.

Sept. 24, 1788.

WE had incessant labour for six hours a-day, for three whole months, in the

* A parsi and a native of Yeẓd, employed by Sir William Jones as a reader.

* Sonnets by Charlotte Smith.

hot season between the tropics; and, what is a sad consequence of long sittings, we have scarcely any vacation. I can, therefore, only write to you a few lines this autumn. Before your brother sent me "*Lewisdon Hill*," I had read it twice aloud to different companies, with great delight to myself and to them: thank the author in my name. I believe his nameless rivulet is called *Bret* or *Brit* (whence *Bridport*) by Michael Drayton, who describes the fruitful Marshwood. * * * *

Pray assure all who care for me, or whom I am likely to care for, that I never, directly or indirectly, asked for the succession to sir E. Impey; and that, if any indiscreet friend of mine has asked for it in my name, the request was not made by my desire, and never would have been made with my assent.

"*Co' magnanimi pochi, a chi 'l ben piace,*"

I have enough; but if I had not, I think an ambitious judge a very dishonourable and mischievous character. Besides, I never would have opposed sir R. Chambers, who has been my friend twenty-five years, and wants money, which I do not.

I have fixed on the year 1800 for my return towards Europe, if I live so long, and hope to begin the new century auspiciously among my friends in England.

P. S. Since I wrote my letter, I have amused myself with composing the annexed ode to Abundance. I took up ten or twelve hours to compose and copy it; but I must now leave poetry, and return for ten months to J. N. and J. S.

LETTER LV.

Sir William Jones to Mr. Justice Hyde.

Sept. 19, 1789.

You have given lady Jones great pleasure by informing us, from so good authority, that a ship is arrived from England: she presents you with her best compliments.

Most readily shall I acquiesce in any alleviation of Horrebow's misery, that you and sir Robert Chambers shall think just and legal. I have not one law book with me; nor, if I had many, should I perfectly know where to look for a mitigation by the court of a sentence, which

they pronounced after full consideration of all its probable effects on the person condemned. I much doubt whether it can legally be done; nor do I think the petition states any urgent reason for it. First, he mentions *losses already sustained* (not therefore to be prevented by his enlargement), and, in my opinion, they cannot easily be more than he deserves. Next, his wife's health may have been injured by his disgrace, and may not be restored by our shortening the time of his confinement, which, if I remember, is almost half expired, and was as short as justice tempered with lenity would allow. His own health is not said to be affected by the imprisonment in such a place, at such a season; for if it were proved that he were dangerously ill, we might, I suppose, remove him to a healthier place, or even let him go to sea, if able surgeons swore, that, in their serious opinion, nothing else could save his life. That is by no means the case, and I confess I have no compassion for him; my compassion is for the enslaved children and their parents. Nevertheless I know the benevolence of your heart, and shall approve whatever you and sir R. C. may do, if any precedent can be found or recollected of a power in the court to do what is now prayed. I am, &c.

LETTER LVI.

Sir William Jones to Sir Joseph Banks.

Sept. 17, 1789.

Dear sir Joseph,

THE season for paying my annual epistolary rents being returned with the rough gales of the autumnal equinox, I am eager to offer my tribute where it is most due, to my best landlord, who, instead of claiming, like the India company, sixteen shillings in the pound for the neat profits of my farm (I speak correctly, though metaphorically), voluntarily offers me indulgences, even if I should run in arrears.

You have received, I trust, the pods of the finest Dacca cotton, with which the commercial resident at that station supplied me, and which I sent by different conveyances, some inclosed to yourself, some to sir George Young, and some by private hands. But I have always found it safer to send letters and

small parcels by the public packet, than by careless and inconsiderate individuals. I am not partial to the *pyangu*, which I now find is its true name; but Mr. Shore found benefit from it, and procured the fresh plants from Arracan, which died unluckily in their way to Calcutta. But, seriously; it deserves a longer trial before its tonic virtues, if it have any, can be ascertained. It is certainly not so fine a bitter as camomile or columbo root.

I wish politics at the devil, but hope that, when the king recovered, science revived. It gives me great pain to know, that *party*, as it is called (I call it faction, because I hold party to be grounded on principles, and faction on self-interest, which excludes all principle), has found its way into a literary club, who meet reciprocally to impart and receive new ideas. I have deep-rooted political principles, which the law taught me; but I should never think of introducing them among men of science; and if, on my return to Europe, ten or twelve years hence, I should not find more science than politics in the club, my seat in it will be at the service of any politician, who may wish to be one of the party.

An intimate friend of Mr. Blane has written to him, at my request, for the newly discovered fragrant grass; and should the plants be sent before the last ships of the season sail, they shall be sent to you. Whether they be the nard of the ancients, I must doubt, because we have sweet grasses here of innumerable species; and Reuben Burrow brought me an odoriferous grass from the place where the Ganges enters India, and where it covers whole acres, and perfumes the whole country. From his account of it, I suspect it to be Mr. Blane's; but I could make nothing of the dry specimens, except that they differed widely from the *Jatamansi*, which I am persuaded is the Indian nard of Ptolemy. I can only procure the dry *Jatamansi*, but if I can get the stalks, roots, and flowers from Butan, I will send them to you. Since the death of Kœnig, we are in great want of a professed botanist. I have twice read with rapture the "*Philosophia Botanica*," and have Murray's edition of the "*Genera et Species Plantarum*" always with me; but, as I am no lynx, like Linnæus, I cannot examine

minute blossoms, especially those of grasses.

We are far advanced in the second volume of our "*Transactions*."

LETTER LVII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Sir J. Macpherson, Bart.

Chrishua-nagur, Oct. 15, 1790.

I GIVE you hearty thanks for your postscript, which (as you enjoin secrecy) I will only allude to ambiguously, lest this letter should fall into other hands than yours. Be assured, that what I am going to say does not proceed from an imperfect sense of your kindness, but really I want no addition to my fortune, which is enough for me; and if the whole legislature of Britain were to offer me a different station from that which I now fill, should most gratefully and respectfully decline it. The character of an ambitious judge is, in my opinion, very dangerous to public justice; and if I were a sole legislator, it should be enacted, that every judge, as well as every bishop, should remain for life in the place which he first accepted. This is not the language of a cynic, but of a man who loves his friends, his country, and mankind; who knows the short duration of human life, recollects that he has lived four-and-forty years, and has learned to be contented. Of public affairs you will receive better intelligence than I am able to give you. My private life is similar to that which you remember: seven hours a day, on an average, are occupied by my duties as a magistrate, and one hour to the new Indian digest, for one hour in the evening I read aloud to lady Jones. We are now travelling to the sources of the Nile with Mr. Bruce, whose work is very interesting and important. The second volume of the "*Asiatic Transactions*" is printed, and the third ready for the press. I jabber Sanscrit every day with the pundits, and hope, before I leave India, to understand it as well as I do Latin. Among my letters I find one directed to you; I have unsealed it; and though it only shews that I was not inattentive to the note with which you favoured me on the eve of your departure, yet I annex it because it was yours, though brought back by my servant.

The latter part of it will raise melancholy ideas ; but death, if we look at it firmly, is only a change of place ; every departure of a friend is a sort of death ; and we are all continually dying and reviving. We shall all meet : I hope to meet you again in India ; but wherever we meet, I expect to see you well and happy. None of your friends can wish for your health and happiness more ardently than, my dear sir, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Warren Hastings, Esq.

Chrishua-nagur, Oct. 17, 1791.

My dear sir,
BEFORE you can receive this, you will, I doubt not, have obtained a complete triumph over your persecutors ; and your character will have risen, not brighter indeed, but more conspicuously bright, from the furnace of their persecution. Happy should I be if I could congratulate you in person on your victory ; but though I have a fortune in England which might satisfy a man of letters, yet I have not enough to establish that absolute independence which has been the chief end and aim of my life ; and I must stay in this country a few years longer : lady Jones has, however, promised me to take her passage for Europe in January 1793, and I will follow her when I can. She is pretty well, and presents her kindest remembrance to you and Mrs. Hastings, whom I thank most heartily for a very obliging and elegant letter. My own health has, by God's blessing, been very firm, but my eyes are weak, and I have constantly employed them eight or nine hours a day. My principal amusement is botany, and the conversation of the pundits, with whom I talk fluently in the language of the *gods* ; and my business, besides the discharge of my public duties, is the translation of " Menu," and of the digest which has been compiled at my instance. Our society still subsists, and the third volume of their Transactions is so far advanced, that it will certainly be published next season. Samuel Davis has translated the " Siurya Siddhanta," and is making discoveries in Indian astronomy ; while Wilford is pursuing his geographical inquiries at Benares, and has found,

or thinks he has found, an account of Africa and Europe, and even of *Britain* by name, in the Scanda Puran ; he has sent us a chart of the Nile from Sanscrit authorities, and I expect soon to receive his proofs and illustrations. Of public affairs in India I say little, because I can say nothing with certainty ; the seasons and elements have been adverse to us in Mysore. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me to be, with unfeigned regard, yours, &c.

LETTER LIX.

Sir William Jones to Lord Teignmouth.

My dear sir,
A FEW days after I troubled you about the yacht, I felt a severe pang on hearing of your domestic misfortune : and I felt more for you than I should for most men, on so melancholy an occasion, because I well know the sensibility of your heart. The only topic of consolation happily presented itself to you : reason perhaps might convince us, that the death of a created being never happens without the will of the Creator, who governs this world by a special interposition of his providential care ; but, as this is a truth which Revelation expressly teaches us, our only true comfort in affliction must be derived from Christian philosophy, which is so far from encouraging us to stifle our natural feelings, that even the Divine Author of it wept on the death of a friend. This doctrine, though superfluous to you, is always present to my mind ; and I shall have occasion in a few years, by the course of nature, to press it on the mind of lady Jones, the great age of whose mother is one of my reasons for hoping most anxiously, that nothing may prevent her returning to England this season. * *
* * I will follow her as soon as I can, possibly at the beginning of 1795, but probably not till the season after that ; for although I shall have more than enough to supply all the wants of a man, who would rather have been Cincinnatus with his plough, than Lucullus with all his wealth, yet I wish to complete the system of Indian laws while I remain in India, because I wish to perform whatever I promise, with the least possible imperfection ; and in so difficult a work

doubts might arise, which the pundits alone could remove. You continue, I hope, to find the gardens healthy; nothing can be more pleasant than the house [in] which we live; but it might justly be called the temple of the winds, especially as it has an octagonal form, like that erected at Athens to those boisterous divinities. I cannot get rid of the rheumatism, which their keen breath has given me, and submit with reluctance to the necessity of wrapping myself in shawls and flannel. We continue to be charmed with the perspicuity, moderation, and eloquence of Filangieri.

Of European politics I think as little as possible; not because they do not interest my heart, but because they give me too much pain. I have "good will towards men, and wish peace on earth;" but I see chiefly under the sun the two classes of men whom Solomon describes, the oppressor and the oppressed. I have no fear in England of open despotism, nor of anarchy. I shall cultivate my fields and gardens, and think as little as possible of monarchs or oligarchs. I am, &c.

FROM THE
LETTERS OF MR. RICHARDSON.

LETTER LX.

Dr. Young to Mr. Richardson.

Bath, Jan. 3, 1758.

My dearest friend,
NUMBERLESS are your favours: Mr. and Mrs. Ditcher are to me extremely kind. I bless God, I at last find benefit from the waters, as to appetite, rest, and spirits. I have now for three nights had pretty good rest, after two sleepless months: and I believe that persevering in the waters is the point, at least in my complaint.

But, at my time of day, how dare I to complain of small things, on the brink of the grave, and at the door of eternity! What a mercy that I am still here! What a fall have I seen around me! I was here twenty years ago, and scarce find one of the generation alive.

I rejoice, I greatly rejoice, to hear that you are better. Might not Bath be as much your friend as mine? In some points our cases are similar.

I think you told me in a letter, that you once found benefit from it; if you could try again, I would attend you to your last hour.

But, say you, are you idle all this time? No, I am on a great work. How great a work is it to learn to die with safety and comfort? This is, as it should be, my business, unless I think it too much to spend my superannuated hours on that which ought to have been the business of my whole life.

I am now (as it is high time) *settling my house in order*—and therefore desire you to send by the carrier the *parcel of sermons* (which were packed up when I was in town), that I may commit them to the flames.

And please to favour me with my *full and long debt* to you; for I am in pain to have it discharged.

That the wing of an indulgent Providence may be ever stretched over you and yours, is the earnest prayer of, dear sir, &c.

LETTER LXI.

Mr. Richardson to Dr. Young.

Jan. 1758.

Rev. and ever dear sir,
I CONGRATULATE you, with my whole heart, on the good effect the waters have at last had on your health.

What may we not promise ourselves from so sound and good a constitution, from your regularity and temperance, and from the powers of *such* a mind, invigorating the whole! a mind, which can enjoy, and even enlarge itself, by that very sleeplessness which tears in pieces the health of others!

"Our cases in some points are similar." Ah, my dear and good sir!—But that exercise, that journeying, which will contribute to your cure, I am unable to take. What a motive do you give me to make you a Bath visit, were I able!—But I hope, on your return, I shall not be deprived of the blessing of your company, and the favour of Mrs. Hallows's, as was my request, by my daughter Ditcher. I have been often at Bath;

but remember not that I received benefit from the waters. The late worthy Dr. Hartley once whispered me that I must not expect any.

“You are about a great work : to learn to die with safety and comfort.” My dear sir, you that have been so admirable a *teacher* of this very doctrine in your excellent *Night Thoughts*, must be more than a *learner*. You have not left to *superannuated hours* (which, I hope, if ever they come, are far, very far distant) that great work. How comfortably, therefore, may you enjoy life, as well as contemplate the closing scene. Your, &c.

P. S. I am sorry that sleeplessness is your complaint. But, when you sleep, you are awake to noble purpose : I, to none at all : my days are nothing but hours of dozings, for want of nightly rest, and through an impatience that I am ashamed of, because I cannot subdue it.

LETTER LXII.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Ryde, Oct. 3, 1755.

Dear sir,

I HAVE delayed answering the kind favour of yours, in hopes I should have seen more of the island, which my good Mrs. Roberts proposed to have shewn me ; but the weather has been so very cold and comfortless here, that we have not had fine days enough successively to make the pleasant expedition we have intended : if we could have gone, I would have done my best to have given you a description of the views and pretty things I had seen ; but I met with some lines, the other day, in a translation of a famous Italian poet, which, in a few expressive words, gives a better account of this sweet country, than I could in a hundred :—

“She wishes much to tarry in this land,
That both both fruitful earth and pleasant
air,
And fountains sweet, and woods on ev’ry hand,
And meadows green, and pastures fresh and
fair ;
Besides large hav’ns, where ships at ease may
stand,
To which the merchants often make repair,
By tempest driven, well loaden with good traf-
fic,
Of things that come from Egypt and from
Africk.”

This poem was the only book of amusement I brought with me ; it is called *Ariosto*, or *Orlando Furioso* ; and is, in its way, a most wonderful piece of imagination, and really a very extraordinary work. My good friends at Appley are so kind to supply me with books when I am absent from them at my little cottage, which is not so often as to read a great deal. I am so apprehensive, now the weather grows cold, that I shall soon lose dear Mrs. Roberts and her amiable daughters, that I am as much with them as possible whilst I can have them so near me ; and their frequent society is what I fear I shall greatly miss when they go to London ; yet, for the sort of people in the low station my old folks are in, I hardly ever met with more simplicity and good sense than they both have ; and it is with some degree of pleasure that I sit in an evening with them, and hear the discourse and gossipings of the day : it makes me smile often, and sometimes rises to a downright laugh ; and whatever promotes and causes this, with innocence and good humour, is as eligible (as far as I know, in the way of conversation) and as worthy to be ranked of the sort called delightful and pleasing, as in the routs and hurricanes of the great, or at court, or even in company with my lord Chesterfield. I am acquainted with few others in this village besides my old folks ; but endeavour to get a speaking and how d’ye kind of knowledge of them all as I meet them ; and I hear by this behaviour I have acquired the title amongst them of “a civil gentlewoman,” and “a very civil gentlewoman” many of them say ; the children bow and curtsy down to the ground, and whisper and jog each other when I am coming, crying, “Here is the gentlewoman coming :” this is homage and respect enough to gratify all the vanity and ambition I have now left, I think, sufficiently. Mrs. Roberts says, when she sees me in my very poor house, sitting on my earthen floor, eating my dinner out of a platter, and my poor bed-chamber without any door to it, and a little window peeping out from under the thatch, bare walls, and every thing suitably poor, that under this humble roof I can have no proud thoughts ; but must have killed every grain of worldly pride and vanity before I could sit down contented in such a place. I was forced

to make a great slaughter, and lay about me prodigiously, before I could conquer those bitter enemies to peace and humility, called passions; but now I think and hope they all lie dead in heaps at several places in London and elsewhere; and I brought nothing down with me but a bundle of mortifications; or, to speak more seriously, a thorough and humble acquiescence to the Divine Will, and an earnest desire, with patience, resignation, and serenity of mind, to work out my salvation, as soon as it will please God to release me: perhaps a little impatience still remains, which tempts me to add "The sooner the better;" and madame Maintenon's words, in a letter of hers, occur to me, where she says, "It is high time to die; why should I stay any longer in this world? I have nothing to do in it; and it is generally business and ambitious views that make us fond of staying here."

I was sadly vexed, at my first coming, at a report which had prevailed here, of my being the author of Mr. Fielding's last work, "*The Voyage to Lisbon*:" the reason, which was given for supposing it mine, was to the last degree mortifying (*viz.* that it was so very bad a performance, and fell so far short of his other works, it must needs be the person *with him* who wrote it). This is the disadvantageous light poor women are held in, by the ill-nature of the world. If they write well, and very ingeniously, and have a brother, then, to be sure—"She could not write so well; it was her brother's, no doubt." If a man falls short of what is expected from his former genius in writing, and publishes a very dull and unentertaining piece, then "To be sure it was his sister, or some woman friend who was with him." Alas! my good Mr. Richardson, is not this a hard case?—To you I appeal, as the only candid man, I believe, with regard to women's understandings; and indeed their only champion and protector, I may say, in your writings; for you write of angels, instead of women.

Admiral Byng and admiral Hawke now lie at Spithead; the latter brought in many French prizes with the fleet.

I heard there was a wreck of a West-Indiaman, on the south side of the island, last Friday (but the crew saved), laden with sugar.—Poor souls! it was a great distress the getting on shore, and being

plundered, as in all likelihood they were. Had they been drowned, I think I should not have been so sorry; for I pity nobody that dies: I pity those left behind. Oh, that I had died for thee, my dearest friend and sister!—but it was not permitted me. Excuse me this sudden gust of grief: I should not, dare not, trust myself to write on this afflicting and tender subject; it makes me incapable, from want of eyes, to add more than my kindest and best respects to dear Mrs. Richardson and the miss Richardsons, to beg the continuance of your friendship, dear sir, and that you would believe me to be, with the highest esteem, your, &c.

LETTER LXIII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss M. Collier.

Dec. 24, 1755.

If my dear miss Collier knew how much I have been immersed in bricks, mortar, plasterers' and carpenters' work, all the summer, and till within this month past, and in that month wholly engrossed by the removal of all my printing materials into the new building, she would think the less hardly of my long silence to a letter that I admire in every line of it.

Do not let this silence deprive me of the description you intended to give me of the views, prospects, situations, that were to offer to you in the excursions you were to make with your hospitable friend, Mrs. Roberts, and her amiable daughters.

Alas! they have left you, I doubt! How are you now? Who have you to associate with, when you carry yourself out of that happy circle? Happy it must be; your ambition trodden under foot—your passions calmed. What a happy creature must you be in these conquests, in your lot, even as you describe it, though it would draw a tear from the eyes of readers less subdued. Your old couple, methinks I love them. *I must*, if they remain kind to you. Sweetly do you describe the power your amiable affability has given you over the affections of the children in your neighbourhood.—"The gentlewoman," my dear miss Collier! The honest villagers distinguish well: you are indeed *the gentlewoman*,

and, what is far greater, *the Christian!* I always loved you; but never so well as since I have had the favour of your last letter. How often have I determined to sit down to answer it, and to tell you all I thought of it and you, in the time of this long silence.

You regret, my dear miss Collier, the hard fate of women of genius, in being denied the merit of their own works, when well received, and in having them attributed to their brothers and other men friends, &c. But think you not that this is a great deal owing to your own sex, who (the capable ones I mean) hide their talents in a napkin, and are afraid, lovely dastards, of shewing themselves capable of the perfections they are mistresses of?—It is well I have not the punishing of such *degraders* of their own sex, so I was going to call them; for do they not, by their wilful and studious concealments of the gifts God has blessed them with, confess, at least, indirectly, an inferiority to the other? What is it they fear, in asserting themselves with modesty, and when occasionally called forth? Is it that the men will be afraid of them, and shun them as wives? Unworthy fear? Let the wretches shun and be afraid of them. Unworthy of such blessings, let such men not dare to look up to merits so superior to their own; and let them enter into contract with women, whose sense is as diminutive as their own souls. What loss would a woman of high attainments and of genius have, in a man of a character so low, as to be afraid of the perfections of the woman, who would give him the honour of calling her his!

I was not a little pleased to hear that you kept up a correspondence with so excellent a woman as Mrs. Berthon is described to be by my good friend Mrs. Watts. Miss Lodwich, another admirable lady: But who can forbear being extremely anxious for them, and for many others, among the multitudes that have perished in the most tremendous catastrophe of Lisbon? What a dreadful dispensation!

Some impatience, in my dear miss Collier, seems still remaining to be conquered; and *when* that can be done, and a thorough reliance made on the Divine goodness, so as neither to covet life, nor to wish for death, but to wait the appointed time with cheerfulness—who

will be so happy as my dear friend in the Isle of Wight?

But what shall we do for a door to your apartment this cold weather? Cannot you find a way to draw upon me, payable at sight, for five guineas? Oblige me, my dear miss Collier, in the grant of this request.—The promissory note I annex*.

My wife and girls most particularly desire their best wishes to be wafted to you.

Once more excuse my long silence; and believe me to be, with great truth, your, &c.

LETTER LXIV.

From the same to the same.

London, Jan. 5, 1756.

I am sorry my dear Miss Collier had the thought of returning the note she mentions, unused. Give me not, madam, that mortification: I hope you will not; and, in that hope, will say no more on the subject.

The miss B——'s! True, my dear; they are among the dastards I had in my head, when I inveighed *so vehemently*, you say, against the geniuses of your sex, who studiously, in many inexplicable plaits, wrap up their napkin'd talents. "Punish them." I wish it were in my power. How do you think it should be, for the first fault, on conviction? Why, to banish them for three months to Ryde, in the Isle of Wight.—Miss Collier to be the inflictor, and the example, too, of all *human* divestments (allow me the odd expression) for that space of time.

But think you, my good miss Collier, that this elaborate concealment of *God-given* talents is an *honest* one? Would these girls put a cheat upon some little-minded creatures, who would be afraid of such talents in their respective wives, as would do them credit? Would they break upon them, when they could not help themselves, and *astun* them with a superiority of good sense? Rather let me ask, would such girls be afraid that such men would slight them were they to unplait their napkins? Would they condescend to join hands with men *capable*

* A note for five guineas.

of slighting them for the excellencies they gave not to themselves? Can you, who read Ariosto, help thinking that you see, on such an idea as this will raise, a lady possessed of the shield of Ruggiero, uncovering it, by surprise, and darting radiant glory in the face of her husband; the catiff, as in one of the cuts of Harrington's translation, sprawling, dazzled, at her feet?

You honour me with the noble title of a vindicator of your sex; but let me desire you to whisper in the ears of the ladies you mention—"Who, my dears, shall vindicate the honour of a sex, the most excellent of which desert themselves?"—Don't mind their blushing looks at one another by turns:—whisper over again the question, till they are determined to amend; or—what or?—be sent to the Isle of Wight. No severe punishment, neither, I hope!—the complicated fault considered.

Mrs. Berthon and family, I have the pleasure of telling you, are safe in their persons. Mr. Millar has a letter from Mr. W.—I have not seen it. That gentleman was almost miraculously saved. Terribly extensive, indeed, has been this earthquake! God Almighty preserve us from the effects of these terraqueous convulsions. Were we to persuade ourselves that they are sent as judgments, what have not we of this kingdom to fear?

Your poor frantic girl, perhaps, thought she was avoiding the evil to come, and which she had prophesied would come when she sought her death in the water. There have been unhappy people, more in their senses than she seems to have been, who have thrown themselves into the arms of death, for fear of dying. This girl must have been earthquake mad, as well as otherwise delirious. Don't you think so?

My wife, my girls, desire their particular respects to you, and join with me in wishing the begun year may be the happiest you have ever known. In the enviable frame of mind you are in, it must be so.

God bless you! adieu! and adieu, my dear miss Collier!

LETTER LXV.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Feb. 11, 1756.

I AM much of your opinion, dear sir, as to the dishonesty of those girls who studiously conceal, in many inexplicable plaits (as you say) the glorious talents bestowed on them. I wish they had courage to assert themselves before marriage, and *astun the catiffs vile*, in order to get rid of them; for I think, should they fall prostrate and sprawling before the dazzling shield of the lady, it would be a properer and more becoming posture for a lover than a husband; besides, it would be highly dishonest in such surpassing geniuses to marry men of inferior understandings in another light than that of deceiving; for ought not the power and government to rest with those who have the superiority of judgment and wisdom? And who would be so base and wanting to her own worth, as voluntarily to enter into a state of submission and acquiescence to the will of a person less qualified to govern than herself—when this would be to enter into a state of the vilest servitude, and the only one truly so called: as the divine Milton describes it, where he says,

"It is not servitude to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same:
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is *servitude*,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier." —

You say (and truly) that there are little-minded creatures who would be afraid of such talents in their respective wives as would outshine themselves.—And again, ask if such girls would be afraid that *such men* should slight them? Why no, surely.—But O! Mr. Richardson (with a deep sigh I say it) that I never had heard men of real good sense, great parts, and many fine qualities lower themselves down to these little-minded creatures, in inveighing with warmth against an uncommon share of understanding in a wife; and shewing but too plainly in their practice, when they come to marry, that they are as much afraid of a rivalry of understanding in their wives as those men you mention.—Indeed, indeed sir, I have heard and seen this in men of unquestionable good sense!—Where, then, shall we find husbands for

our dear uncommon geniuses of girls?—Are not they under a kind of necessity (if they ever intend to marry) to continue their napkins in plaits before marriage, nor ever dare to unfold them, even after marriage, to the generality of men, except they could meet with a noble-minded Sir Charles Grandison, or such as have grace enough to endeavour to tread in his steps.

I have a mixture of joy and tender concern in the account you give me of my friends at Lisbon, and from what I have heard from others. They are safe in their persons, it seems; but poor Mr. St—bs and family have lost every shilling they had in the world, it's said. Dear! what a trying circumstance is this to people in great affluence, as they were. I pray God support and comfort them under this heavy affliction: they are worthy good people, and I hope they will find friends to assist them.

My good old folks—you can't think how I love them!—the more, I believe, because they hearken with such attention and admiration to Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison, which latter I have now begun to them. They believe both Clarissa and Sir Charles to be real stories, and no work of imagination; and I don't care to undeceive them. The good man is more than threescore, he believes; but quite alive, and has none of the infirmities of age. She has one of the most agreeable and placid countenances I ever saw. They love each other, and the husband rejoices in the balance of sense being of her side, which it is, in some degree; and glories in her being able to read and write, which he can scarcely do. I can't quit my old folks without expressing my happiness in them, and gratitude to all my kind friends, who put it in my power, by the help my little pittance is to them, to afford them more of the necessities and comforts of life than they enjoyed before I came.

In short, my good Gaffer and his wife, I believe, are just such good old folks as Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, in Pamela.

Compliments to dear Mrs. Richardson; and believe me to be, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXVI.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

Tunbridge Wells, Aug. 2, 1748.

WHAT say you to me *here*, miss Highmore?—“Sure, if you go to Tunbridge (says a lady you dearly love, but not better than every one who has the pleasure of knowing her, loves), you will not value travelling a few miles in order to visit us.” Tunbridge Wells are about thirty-eight miles distant from London: Hatch (I have inquired) is about forty: and no extraordinary roads. I, a bad traveller, cannot sit a horse—come hither to drink the waters for health sake—can ill spare the time—propose but *three* weeks—have been here *one*, last Friday—this *my* situation.

The geniuses of Hatch, how different theirs! Nothing to do but study their diversion and amusement. Tunbridge, in high season, a place devoted to amusement.—Time entirely at command, though not hanging heavy; impossible indeed it should.—Vehicles, whether four-wheeled or four-legged, at will; riding, a choice.—And the worthy Dr. Knatchbull here. What says my fair correspondent?—What her worthy and kind friends to *this*?

Do come and see how your other old lover spins away, hunting after new faces, at fifty-seven. You will see him in his kingdom; and he will read to you a new performance, calculated, indeed, for the parts of the place; “A Dialogue between a Father and a Daughter,” very sprightly; a little sprinkling of something better in it, but very sparingly sprinkled; as if the author were afraid that his mind should be thought as antique as his body.—Calculated to reconcile fatherly authority with filial obedience (so he says):—But, I think, to level the former, and throw down distinction.

He read it to the speaker, who thought it better managed than he expected: but referred him to me upon it; for I was present, and objected to it. I have, according to my usual prolixity, given him half a sheet upon half a page. He wants me to go on with my remarks—has altered two or three passages; but I think not for the better: it is a task, therefore, that I decline. For I am told I should not scribble—have a large correspondence.

upon my hands. Business, besides, very ill sparing me; and post and coach employed to carry up my directions, and in receiving accounts of management; with about one half of which, only, I can be pleased.

Lord, Lord! miss Highmore! What figures do Mr. Nash and Mr. Cibber make, hunting after new beauties, and with faces of high importance traversing the walks! God bless you, come and see them!—And if you do, I will shew you a still more grotesque figure than either: A sly sinner, creeping along the very edges of the walks, getting behind benches; one hand in his bosom, the other held up to his chin, as if to keep it in its place: afraid of being seen, as a thief of detection. The people of fashion, if he happen to cross a walk (which he always does with precipitation), *unsmiling* their faces, as if they thought him in their way; and he, as sensible of so being, stealing in and out of the bookseller's shop, is if he had one of their glass-cases under his coat. Come and see this odd figure! You never *will* see him, unless I shew him to you: and who knows when an opportunity for that may happen again at Tunbridge?

And here have I turned over.—But how ready are you to catch at a pretence for making your letter short, when you say, that you are afraid that I should design mine for an example in that respect! But how little reason have you to call mine short, when I write more (in quantity) in one line, than you do in three; and more in half a page than you do in four whole ones. What, though my length is my dispraise, I cannot help it: I have no patent for brevity: nor is it every one who, like miss Highmore, can write a great deal in a little compass. Who can paint the dew-dropt meadows, every spire of grass glittering like diamonds of the first water—the obscuring clouds—the sunny glories of the great luminary—the shady lanes, perfumed and enamelled with honeysuckles—the fragrant fields of new cut hay—the light lasses, and nimble lads, resting on their rakes and forks, lost in wonder and reverence, when they behold the *horse-folks*, as you humbly phrase it! Who can anticipate the yellow harvest, the busy hinds, and the reward of industry!—Who can figure out, in still superior lights, the beauties of contemplation

which she enjoys in her Clarissa-closet (as she is pleased to call it), with pen, pencil, and books!—The agreeable conversation, at other times, of her enlivening friends; and the charms of dear variety, that soul of female pleasure: and fifty and fifty other no less delightful subjects; and bring them all into the compass of a letter of fifty or sixty short lines!—This is given to miss Highmore to do; but not to me.

Dr. Knatchbull desires his affectionate compliments to all at Hatch. He gives me his countenance in wishing to see you all here. My respectful ones to sir Wyndham and Mrs. Knatchbull, Mr. Cibber's duty attends you. And I am, my dear miss Highmore, your, &c.

P. S. You might have gone on with your subject of happiness; for who is it that tastes it, knows it, and deserves it, if miss Highmore does not?

LETTER LXVII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, July 15, 1755.

My dear miss Highmore was very good to write so soon after her arrival at Weston House: and had I not been obliged to pass two days at Enfield, which set me behind-hand with all my business, she should have had her kind expectations answered before the last week had elapsed.

But why filled my amiable girl the first side of her sheet with so melancholy an account of her depression of spirits, on leaving a father, so well beloved by every body, to go to a delightful spot, and to a lady of whom she is so fond, and who was always so fond of her?

“I hope the vain girl (say you) has not represented herself of too much consequence.” You have not, my dear. Do we not all know that you are of the utmost to that indulgent parent; and of very high to all who have the pleasure of your acquaintance? But looks it not as if one of the frankest-hearted girls in Britain took a little hardly some of my past truly paternal freedoms, when she adds—“If she has, I am sure Mr. Richardson will cure her of that mistake.” Well, but my dear Highmore, this shall not hinder me from telling you of your

faults, if any appear to me; and I hope you will deal as freely with me;—I have multitudes—I wish I were but half as good as I think you.

Your papa writes so well, and is so fond of writing to his beloved daughter, that I will leave it to him to tell you how happy he thinks himself in knowing you to be so; and that you are right in supposing, “that his benevolent heart expands with delight at the account he receives of your health and felicity.” When, therefore, you can turn the bright side of things outward, as you do, your mental *Æsculapius* (as you do a certain man the honour to call him) tells you, that you have prudence and reflection enough to be your own physician; and, that had not your spirits been weakened by indisposition, and a train of disagreeable perplexities, that have affected one of the evenest tempers in woman, you would not have had reason to paint your sensibilities in such dark colours, on your leaving, for such agreeable friends, even a father, whose paternal goodness you have from infancy so largely experienced.

How sweetly, as you describe, do you pass your time! I rejoice, with all my heart, in Mrs. God—!l’s happiness. One of the greatest pleasures that a beneficent mind can know, is to have it in her power to lay an obligation on a worthy, on a grateful, mind.

“A strong taste for literature; a mind well stocked and improved by the productions of authors, ancient and modern; an amiable disposition; good sense.” Where could your fair friend have made a better choice? Where else so good a one, in such an age as this, of foplings and *petit maîtres*? I wonder not that such a young gentleman “behaves so properly (as you say) to his lady; and that your esteem for him rises every day, more and more, as you are a witness of that his proper and affectionate behaviour to her.” I had both reverence and love for her excellent mother; methinks I could wish her to be permitted to look down from her heaven, to see how happy that beloved daughter is, for whose happiness she was so anxious. God continue it to them both—and them to each other, as an example of that conjugal piety, which is so very rare in the present age, among people of condition!

“What a strange character does that of Cicero always appear to you.” It is a strange one; yet he was a glorious creature. Great geniuses, we are told, have not small faults. You have made such proper observations on this great man’s failings, that it is needless to add to them. And charmingly do you say, “that the truly noble and exemplary character is that, which is uniformly good, great, and wise, in every trial.”

What a wretched creature is the man of title you mention! But I have not so much pity for the lady as you have. She knew whom she married, and, I doubt not, proposed to herself at first counterbalances which would content her; and this is evident to me, by the way in which she lives. What signifies to her the low company “he keeps,” so as he confines himself “to an obscure corner of his own magnificent house with them;” and leaves her (in the character of “an amiable woman,” and, in every one’s eye, the more amiable for her misfortunes) “to receive in the rest, and nobler parts of the house, the visits of every creditable family around her?”—so long as she finds herself “honoured and beloved by her visitors; and has the credit, as well as the power, of having ornamented the noble house she reigns in, with absolute sovereignty, according to her own directions?”—so long as she has “an equipage and retinue of her own, every prospect art or nature can afford to please surrounding her stately habitation?” With all these advantages, and such a lord, ask you, can she be tolerably happy? Yes, madam, exquisitely so, as a managing woman, and as one who knew (as I hinted) beforehand the wretched creature she chose to marry. And, indeed, you answer your own question:—“She appears so,” say you “(well she may!); and having been long accustomed to the present method (an enviable one it may be called! for must not the man be a loathsome creature?) may really be (the deuce is in her if she be not!) as tranquil and cheerful as her easy and polite deportment seems to denote.”

This advantage she moreover reaps from the low and servile company he keeps, that through them she can manage her lord as she pleases; since they and he are hers in absolute property. Come, come, madam, let us shew our

pity in the right place. The tranquil lady deserves it not—she is a managing woman, as I said : all women love power ; she has it in its perfection. She has, perhaps, shewn it, eccentrically, in more instances than one ; and every body knows, that lady O—— can be lord as well as lady O——, whenever she pleases—and fit she should, when the poor creature, her lord, so behaves as to be the jest as well as companion of his own menials.

Next Thursday my good-naturedly perverse wife thinks of going to North End !!! O, miss Highmore ! women ought to be controlled, if they are like my wife—in pity to themselves they ought. For, when left to their own will, how do they choose ! how are they puzzled !

Mrs. G—— has done me favour in her remembrance of me. My best respects attend her, and, if acceptable, hers. I am involved in sentimentizing :—very hard, among so many charming girls, that I could not get myself excused from this task. No helps from any of you. Go, naughty, idle chits—to pretend to approve what I am about, as if it would be promotive of the public good ; and yet, when I hoped a finger from every one of you, to find no aid—not so much as extracts from a work ready written to your hands ! yet call me papa, boast of filial regards, and so forth : yet, do-tard as I am, I cannot forbear priding myself in my girls—and on every occasion styling myself, as now to you, your, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, Jan. 31, 1751.

I AM, when I recollect some of the free things I have formerly written to my dear miss Highmore, extremely angry with myself. I believe I loved to blame rather than commend, some years ago. Fie upon me, for my ill-nature, if so—and vainly too—setting up for a Mentor, when I was but a Momus. But do I grow better-natured, and see clearer, as I grow older ? I congratulate myself upon that, if I do. What admirable observations you make on the consequence it is of for young persons to be thrown

early into good and improving company ! I had a good mind to transcribe every word you wrote on this subject, and to beg of you to let it pass for my own. What a poor creature was I at your age ! And you were always so good—were you not ?

But, though I love you for your charity, when you infer from premises very laudable, that we should make great allowances in errors, not grossly immoral, for those who have not had the benefit of being accustomed in their youth to good and improving company, I cannot allow of the abatement you mention to be made, of the merit of those who have had better opportunities, and improved by them. I will not, my dear miss Highmore, allow of your level ; in order to bring down to a state of nature, those who owe their merit to actions that are the consequences of habitual virtue. Let us judge of merit and demerit as they appear to us, from whatever source they spring ; and not, my dear child, think it assurance to condemn the contemptible. We shall then encourage merit (too apt to be despised by such, in order to bring it down to their own level), and, through shame, have a chance to amend the faulty, and make them strive to be measured by the standard of the others. It is not to be imagined what it is in the power of women to do in this particular : especially of those who are amiable in person, and have a reputation for good sense. Often have I seen a coxcomb, who set out with all the confidence of a laughing Sir Hargrave, shrink into himself, merely at the reproving eye, and restrained smile, of a young lady of judgment ; and particularly, if she has had the address to turn round on the spot, and distinguish, by her smiling familiarity, another man in company with whom she had reason to be better pleased.

No vain woman can be more fond of admiration, than men of this cast : let them be conscious of a judiciously given disappointment, and no men are such nothings. The sensible woman, who laughs with the creature she should laugh at, debases herself ; puts herself on a level with him. But this is the judgment, to avoid superciliousness, and being really prudish (no matter for the aspersion) in the correction she looks ; for a look will give it. I am speaking of

a sensible woman, you know!—such women, scores of which, I was going to say, I have the happiness to know.

“The admonitions of parents can never have the effect on young minds, that the examples of persons near their own age will produce; and reasons why it must be so are obvious and natural enough.” Never, miss H——! where the parents are companionable to their children; and can allow for the foibles of youth—such as yours, suppose! Where the children are reasonable, and have no points in view, which they are ashamed to own!—What! never, miss H——? And are there no such cases? Cannot there be such open-hearted, frank girls as Harriet, where there is a Mrs. Harley or Mrs. Selby?—Unhappy that there are not more such indulgent parents, and such undisguisedly-minded children! How obvious, soever, the reason for what you say is, there cannot be a more dangerous doctrine propagated among young people, than that which springs from an allowance of this nature. And I have, therefore, taken notice in print, that young people, in certain cases, should never be determined by the advice of young people; and the less by that of those who are in the same circumstances with themselves. It is not, I have said, what you would do, Polly, Sukey, &c. were you in my case; but what ought to be done. I know that your observation is rather owing to facts than justice. But we will not, if you please, too readily give up justice to facts, lest we should make custom a law; where it would be of general use to applaud the exception, and to endeavour to weaken the force of the faulty rule.

Give me leave to say, that I intended more by setting in strong lights the frankness of Harriet's character, in one of the most delicate circumstances of female life, than what, at first sight, may be thought of, on a cursory reading. What do you think I have had the confidence to answer to the pressing instances of two persons, for whom I have great honour, that I would begin a new piece?—that I would think of doing so, when I had reason to believe, that the many delicate situations that this last piece, as well as *Clarissa*, abounded with, were generally understood and attended to! What a deuce! must a man be always writing?

Fie upon me, for taking the first sheet

of paper that came to hand: I am come to the end of it already; and how much unsaid!—I have no room to add more, than that I am your, &c.

LETTER LXIX.

From the same to the same.

London, Sept. 19, 1757.

I WRITE, my dear miss Highmore, in gratitude, in fear, in love, in hope, in pain. In gratitude—for your favour to me of Sept. 6th, and to thank good Mrs. God—ll, through your hands, for her kind remembrance of me.

In fear—of hurting your good papa, who grudges me the favour of so kindly-long a letter from you (the thanks I got for communicating it to him), by doing offence to your eyes:—but a little bit of jealousy in his fear, for all that, lest any should, by accident, receive from you a letter one line longer than any one of those you wrote to himself. What will he do, if you should take heart at last, and marry, and your husband be sometimes distant from you!

In love—because I cannot help it, if I would; and take delight in the account you give of that health, and serenity of mind, which I pray may ever attend you.

In pain—because I cannot pour out my heart as glibly as usual, or rather as formerly to my beloved friends, when I paid my duty to them on paper, by reason of paralytic and failing fingers, when that heart is as sincerely theirs as ever.

In hope—(I had like to have forgot that, having so little left for myself) that you and all you love, if that be possible, continue always as happy, with some necessary variations, however, to keep the pool of life from stagnating, as you describe yourself to be at the penning of the letter before me.

Hush! hush! hush! dear Mr. Highmore! No such thing, as the above particularization, being an infallible sign of a long answer. I will be brief in the rest, for your sake; and also for my own; though once I loved to prattle to this dear girl.

I am delighted with your account of your studies, your pursuits, your diversions, and with those of the more athletic of your own sex with you, mentioned by you with so much advantage to them all.

"Your well-furnished library," amusement equally entertaining and instructive!

"Henry and Francis;" of all books of the kind?—That it has been read by Mrs. ——— is recommendation with numbers! Mrs. Montague, lady Bradshaigh, miss Highmore. Well, I'll take it up again, and try to like it better than I did, when I dipped into it last. No one has a higher opinion of these names, and of Mrs. D——'s judgment, than I.

"My opinion of Mr. Gray's Odes?" You know I admire the author. I have heard that you and Mr. G—— have both studied them together, and have found out all their beauties. I have no doubt but they are numberless—but indeed have not had head clear enough to read them more than once, as yet. But from you I expect the result of Mr. G——'s studies and discoveries on the subject, as also your marginal notes; which will not, I hope, be too severe, &c.—Why that caution to me, my miss Highmore? I am glad I did not say all I said to lady B—— about Henry and Francis.

"And then comes the kindly felicitating subject;" to which I directed Patty to answer.—She did, I hope.

And there, Mr. Highmore, is an end, I hope, of your tender solicitude for the eyes of our dear girl, on my account, for the present!

Excuse bad writing, interlining, &c.—"Was it not always bad?" Yes; but never so bad as now. Repeated respects to Mrs. God—ll. I am, &c.

LETTER LXX.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Sept. 27, 1754.

I THANK you, dear sir, for your tender concern, good wishes, and hearty prayer for my worthy friend, Mr. Tickell. I have the satisfaction to assure you, his late disorder has not so greatly impaired his strength, nor sunk his spirits to that miserably low state, which his over-anxious mother's fear made her apprehend. God be praised, she is comforted, by a hopeful appearance of her beloved son's perfect recovery. He is pretty well in health, at present, thank God.

I protest I am at a loss how to answer some parts of your last obliging favour.

Give me leave to say, you have more good nature, humility, and patience, than any other man upon earth, or you certainly are the greatest hypocrite under the sun. If I could suspect Mr. Richardson's veracity, I should look upon your submission to my inferior judgment as a polite piece of complaisance. I begin to fear you think me too peremptory, and self-sufficient; if so, you resolve, perhaps, to acquiesce, rather than contend, with a positive woman. You are extremely indulgent, and I ought to thank you for every favourable allowance you afford me, who have not any of that delightful, spirited wit, and charming vein of humour, which plead excuse for not quite right things in lady B——.

Mrs. Belfour has given you a right notion of this mad-cap, and I could tales unfold; but—I never could manage her; nor will I have any more boxing bouts with madam ———. If our favourite charming Harriet cannot make this sprightly lady blush a little, at her unreasonable aversion; or, at least, silence her exclamation against old maids, I pronounce her incurable.

The worthy maiden you mention is an honourable woman. I really believe I was fond of this good-natured aunt Catherine before I could speak. Lady B—— is as well acquainted with her real worth; but I will not tell all I know, because you are sufficiently informed already. I most sincerely love this ungovernable lady B——; we always were affectionate sisters, although her over-hasty disposition did not altogether please my graver turn. She has been blest with constant good health, and, thank God, she still enjoys that great blessing. I ever was, and am, less happy in this respect; and yet this lady B——, with her high health, and a continual flow of fine spirits, never was active in using necessary exercise: that neglect is attended with a consequence which gives me concern; because it renders her incapable of using that exercise which I think needful for preserving health. I cannot help pitying a human creature, loaded with fat; it ever was my endeavour to guard against that heavy condition; and I am very thankful, that I can reap benefit and pleasure from my nimble feet, and a trotting horse.

After much ado about nothing, let me

assure you, sir, I have more than the shadow of an inclination to oblige you. I willingly comply with your request. Pray, dear sir, call not the fragment, you desire to peruse, the amended History of *Clarissa*. I have only attempted to alter particular parts abruptly. It is, in short, a medley. I told you I had weakly endeavoured to imitate. No matter what I intended by some foolish things, thrown amongst the heap—if you can read it, you shall.

After scribbling this long epistle, I have not fully, I think, answered your last letter. Here is enough, however, to try your patience; allow me, at present, to subscribe myself, your obliged, &c.

LETTER LXXI.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

October 10, 1754.

ALLOW me to congratulate your ladyship on Mr. Tickell's amendment, and the prospect of his perfect recovery. I join with you, madam, to bless God for it.

Lady Bradshaigh acquaints me, that she, as well as your ladyship, meets with persons who quarrel with Sir Charles Grandison. They are welcome. A good character is a gauntlet thrown out. As some apprehend it reflects upon themselves, they perhaps think they have a right to be affronted. The character of a mere mortal cannot, ought not, to be quite perfect. It is sufficient, if its errors be not premeditated, wilful, and unrepented of: and I shall rejoice if there be numbers of those who find fault with the more perfect characters in the piece because of their errors, and who would be themselves above being guilty of the like in the same situation. Many things are thrown out in the several characters, on purpose to provoke friendly debate; and perhaps as trials of the reader's judgment, manners, taste, and capacity. I have often sat by in company, and been silently pleased with the opportunity given me, by different arguers, of looking into the hearts of some of them, through windows, that at other times have been close shut up. This is an advantage that will always be given by familiar writing, and by characters drawn from

common life. A living author, who succeeds tolerably, will have more enemies than a dead one. A time will come, and perhaps it is not far off, when the writer of certain moral pieces will meet with better quarter from his very censurers. His obscurity—a man in business pretending to draw characters for warning to one set of people; for instruction to another: Presumptuous!—But enough of this subject. I ought to be, and am abundantly satisfied with the kind reception given to what I have obtruded upon the world in a new light, and in the approbation of many truly pious and good.

Your ladyship is at a loss, you say, to answer some parts of my last letter. You are pleased to magnify my patience and humility: For what?—For having a great opinion of your judgment, and for inviting your correction. “Either (you say) I have more good-nature than any man on earth, or am certainly the greatest hypocrite under the sun.” From the knowledge I hope I have of my own heart, with that whole heart I disclaim hypocrisy, the lowest of all vices, ingratitude excepted. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; and can it require any great degree of patience to hear characters blamed that were not intended to be perfect? What battles have your beloved sister and I fought? She has reason to blame me for my rusticity, rather than for my yielding.

Your ladyship “could tales unfold.” I hope lady B—— will *not* be quiet, that you may be provoked to unfold them. I am particularly glad that your ladyship has not the dislike to a certain class of females, whom that lady is so fond of satirizing. O! how I have used her on this occasion! She can hardly forbear: but just touches them now, and away. I think I have made her half afraid. But this miss Do—! let us join forces, madam, against this miss Do. There is not a better lady on earth than your sister, when miss Do is out of the way. Strange! that so excellent a lady as lady B—— (your ladyship's sister) should be so misled by such a flirt as miss Do.—Yet, not so very strange neither: for I know not how it is, but I myself, though I could sometimes beat miss Do, see something to be pleased with in that lively girl. Favour me, dear madam, with the

history of this young lady, and her airs, that I may either like her more or less. I am sure she must have some good qualities, or she could never have had such an interest in the heart of a sister of lady Echlin.

O that I could have the honour to see you two dear sisters under my happy roof! Lady B—— gives me hope, that she will be in London this winter. Then would your ladyship and I, if there were occasion, join; but there would be no occasion. She would be all goodness. Miss Do would not be with her. She never once, in the visits she honoured me with, when last in town, brought that girl with her. She only is her companion in her closet or dressing-room; and now and then writes a paragraph for her there. And my lady is, in her absence, so mild, so meek! Bless us, madam, you cannot think how mild! how meek! And I am so awkward, for not seeing any thing reprovable in her, yet remembering many flightinesses in her writing, that I know not how to behave myself to her.

A thousand thanks to your ladyship for your kind compliance with my request to be entrusted with your papers on the History of Clarissa. When? By what way will they come? I was in hopes, that the permission and notice of the transmission would have been given in the same letter. They shall be very safe when they arrive, and attend your ladyship's commands in the return.

I have written to Mr. Skelton. Let me entreat your acceptance of his Discourses from me. Your ladyship would greatly oblige me if you could inform me of any thing I or mine could do here to give you pleasure. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXII.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

July 31, 1757.

Dear sir,
I know you are inclined to judge favourably, and naturally disposed to pity the afflicted: I therefore doubt not your making a reasonable allowance, nor your having tender compassion for me, when I assure you my long silence hath been occasioned by a woeful misfortune, which sorely afflicts my heart. I cannot

describe what my anxious mind suffered between slender hope and tormenting fear before a melancholy event made me a sorrowful widow. Indeed, sir, I have lost a tender husband; a very worthy, valuable man. No wonder I am bitterly afflicted for such a lamentable loss: but I endeavour to moderate my grief by considering it is my duty to submit patiently to the will of God. Almighty wisdom, seeing what was best, and good for us, has punished me deservedly; and under this trial let me be thankful, that I have not the least doubt of my dear husband being happily released from a miserable state of health. A blessed change it was for him, who endured a long and painful illness with exemplary patience and resignation; contented to live or die, as it pleased God Almighty. No mortal ever quitted this life with more apparent tranquillity. The last sad scene, so distressing to me, was not unhappy to him I am sure; and that is my consolation. Excuse me, dear sir, troubling you with my groans. I shall add a few lines more concerning my present condition; for I cannot help telling you, my dear departed friend hath testified his respect and dependence on a faithful wife, by appointing me sole executrix; and I am also guardian to his only nephew, who inherits his good uncle's estate and title. I am as anxious for this young man's welfare as if he were my own child: and his uncle and I have been parents to him from the hour he was born. This boy's father died several months before the child came into the world; and his mournful mother, overwhelmed with grief, expired immediately after the birth of her son. An infant, thus deprived of both father and mother, is a most pitiable case: but he has not been an unhappy orphan; and I heartily wish my great loss may not prove a greater misfortune to him. At his early time of life, in such circumstances, and in such a libertine age, a boy under seventeen is in a dangerous situation. God give him grace to make a right use of an uncommon good understanding. He is a fine hopeful youth at present; has had a private education, not to his disadvantage in any respect; and I hope to see him a sober and serious student at Oxford, please God we live. Some people would be apt to think me impertinent, and perhaps would say,

What is all this to me?—but Mr. Richardson, I know, is not such a man.

I have seen Mr. Sheridan here lately; he appeared to be in pretty good spirits; but I think he cannot be tolerably happy, unless he quits the slavish management, which does not better either his health or fortune. The little wonder was quite a new scene to him; he admires the romantic situation greatly: but, alas! it does not afford me pleasure as usual; Villarusa is not what it was: all appears dull and gloomy in my tearful eye, though I do labour to recover my spirits.

I shall rejoice to hear you enjoy such a state of health as is sincerely wished and prayed for by, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

August 12, 1757.

MOST heartily do I condole with your ladyship on your very great loss; and should have presumed to do it before, had I not been myself so ill in the nervous way, that for some time I was unable to write; and had I not at other times considered, that any thing I could offer by way of consolation for so heavy a deprivation, to so good a Christian and so pious a heart, would be needless; and that time, the pacifier of *every woe*, could only, by God's grace, alleviate *yours*. Nor did I doubt, that your good sister, and your favoured bishop, would be ready to pour the balm of Christian comfort into the wounds of your mind.

I congratulate you, madam, on the resignation and pious departure of the gentleman you so tenderly loved. What pleasure must this give, on reflection, to such a mind as yours! How much ought this reflection to alleviate the pangs that will accompany it on the loss you have so recently sustained!

Your Villarusa will be again your Villarusa to you; but time must have first mellowed your affliction. A journey to England will perhaps be of use to you: to Oxford, so much in the way of your new duty; to Lancashire, receiving from, and giving comfort to, beloved relations there; to London, perhaps in company of those dear relations, and to a beloved daughter and her young family, and

other friends. [May I have the honour to be one in the list?] Then, after all these duties paid, and inclinations gratified, will your Villarusa appear to you with new charms; nor will a tender sigh and silent tear to the memory of the dear departed, in that little wonder, diminish, but rather exalt, the joys of your meditation.

God Almighty sanctify to your ladyship your present affliction, is a prayer put up by all mine, as well as by, madam, your, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Rook Hermitage, Nov. 10, 1757.

Dear sir,

ACCEPT my grateful thanks for your last obliging favour. "Time," as you observe, "is the pacifier of every woe," with God's assistance; and time may mellow my affliction. But very sure I am, deep wounding grief is incurable on this side the grave. "Villarusa will again be Villarusa to me," you say. No, sir, that is impossible! This house, these admired improvements, this country, never more can be agreeable to me. If God Almighty permits me to see my native country, it is probable I shall not return again to Ireland. And yet I am so attached to my hermitage I feel unwilling to quit that bewitching little cell. When my sorrowful days came, the little wonder was, and is, a wonderful recreation to me; and thankful I am, that this innocent retired amusement serves to unbend my mind. I wish Mr. Richardson could see me in that romantic situation, seated on the mid-rock, the briny flood flowing within a few yards of my feet. Don't be alarmed, good sir, you may venture to sit by me; it is not Shakspeare's dangerous mid-rock.

I am glad you call my freedom kind; but cannot allow that it is in the least condescending to acquaint Mr. Richardson with my affairs; nor should he, who so justly merits esteem, doubt his "being one" in the short "list" of my most valuable friends; one on whom I could rely, and repose a fearless confidence. Although we are not personally acquainted, surely there is friendship

subsisting between us; and if I do ever reach Old England, I trust my honoured friend "may live to see the day."

I hope my young man will not disappoint my expectation of his settling at the university; but I dare not be oversure of any thing in this uncertain world.

I must tell you, sir, our good bishop gives me hopes of seeing him in Great Britain; and I hope you may see that agreeable day. This excellent prelate has been particularly kind to his unseen admirer, under affliction; not been sparing "to pour the balm of Christian comfort:" nothing is wanting but a wished-for visit from Patmos. But why should I expect such a compliment? His lordship, in every letter to me, mentions Mr. Richardson with great regard. I told him you had been so much indisposed in the nervous way, that for some time you were not able to write. He answered, "Not able to write! alas! that great genius! then I must not trouble the good man with a temptation to write to me."

I beg my respects to Mrs. Richardson and to your daughters, with grateful thanks to you and them for that kind concern and pious remembrance, which will always be duly acknowledged by, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

Dec. 3, 1757.

You charm me, madam, with your description of your rock hermitage. What a sweet retirement must it be, as you have improved it! "The little wonder (you tell me) in your more thoughtful hours was, and still is, a wonderful recreation to you; and that you are thankful (I am sure you are for every relief) that this innocent, retired amusement serves to unbend your mind." And does your ladyship wish, that I "could see you in that romantic situation, seated on the mid-rock, the briny flood flowing within a few yards of your feet? 'Don't be alarmed, sir (add you most condescendingly), you may venture to sit by me—it is not Shakspeare's dangerous mid-rock.'"

What would I give for a sketch of this sweet hermitage, and of the wonders

round it, and in prospect from it? With what delight should I place it near the picture of the house at Haigh, which I was allowed upon my own terms (as this must be) to take a copy of; your beloved sister's and sir Roger's figures in it, meditating the beauties of the situation! May I not hope, dear madam, to be so indulged? Is there not in your knowledge some young artist, that on my account could be so employed? Let me have in constant view the sweet, the "bewitching little cell, which so attaches to it the heart of good lady Echlin, which she feels so unwilling to quit; which is, in her deeper meditation, a wonderful recreation to her, and serves to unbend her mind, and in which she condescends to wish I could see her."

Your ladyship bids me hope for the pleasure of seeing you in England. I should have the more joy on such a wished-for occasion, as I think the change of scene must be of consolation and diversion to you; and as you must give and receive so much delight to and from such near and dear relations as you have here; and the rather as you are of opinion that Villarsa, consolatory as it is at times to you, can never be all that it once was to you.

If the land and sea views I am a petitioner for, with your sweet hermitage, cannot be conveniently granted, a sketch in Indian ink, or black lead, on vellum, would delight me, hanging before me in view of your dear sister's and sir Roger's Haigh. Still, my dear lady, either way, on my own terms.

God bless your young gentleman, your ward! May he answer all your pious cares and wishes. Your, &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

Dear sir,
You ask, "How can I find time for so much reading," &c.? Those who are not obliged to attend to any particular business, have nothing to do but to look for time, and they are sure to find it. But there are those, who sit with their eyes shut, and let it pass unobserved through wilfulness or negligence. No wonder such do not find time.

O you—you—you worse than ill-natured! How could you rip up the old story of traversing the Park! How could you delight to tear the tender skin off an old wound that never will be quite healed! I was hurt more than you could be. My pain was in the mind, yours only bodily. Did not you forgive me? However (behold the wax I am made of!) the latter end of this paragraph melts and disarms my intended anger: for the present only; for I shall find farther matter for quarrel, I foresee.

The first time my friend saw your picture he asked, "What honest face have you got there?" And, without staying for an answer, "Do you know, I durst trust that man with my life, without farther knowledge of him." I answered, "I do know you might do so with safety; and I put you down for a judge of physiognomy."

As I sit at my writing-desk, I cannot look up without viewing your picture; and I had some hopes the looking upon it, as I writ, might a little have restrained, or at least kept me within bounds. I have tried the experiment, when I have been upon the edge of a ranting humour, and heard myself whisper, "What! with that smiling face?"—and found I was encouraged rather than restrained; so gave you a familiar nod, and ranted on, as I do now, without fear or wit.

I only meant to joke a little upon Dr. Young, not to be severe. If it has that appearance, pray let him not have it; for he might think me very impertinent. He pretends to be serious upon this.

Dec. 27.—I have, since I wrote to you last, stumbled into Dr. Middleton on the *Miraculous Powers*; and, in truth, I do not like him. Perhaps I do not understand him. But to me he appears a caviller at immaterial points. And I doubt he may do more harm by the controversy he has occasioned, than he can do good by endeavouring to prove many pretended miracles to be either fabulous or the effects of priestcraft. But, seriously, I must own he has lessened these ancients greatly in my opinion; for, what can be said in favour of their countenancing so many impositions as it plainly appears they did? It is but making a poor compliment to Christianity to say it wanted such gross abuses

to strengthen and propagate it. And though, to the rational and well-judging, it shines the clearer for having struggled through and shaken off these clogs of absurdities; yet its appearing in its native excellence is not owing to those, through whose hands it was transmitted to us.

You see, sir, I write upon every subject to you, without considering whether proper or not: but I know, if I am wrong, you will inform me.

Dec. 28.—I should be greatly delighted to see the correspondence between you and the young lady you mention. Some time or other I hope to be favoured with it.

I own I do not approve of great learning in women. I believe it rarely turns out to their advantage. No farther would I have them to advance than to what would enable them to write and converse with ease and propriety, and make themselves useful in every stage of life. I hate to hear Latin out of a woman's mouth. There is something in it, to me, masculine. I could fancy such an one weary of the petticoat, and talking over a bottle. You say, "the men are hastening apace into dictionary learning." The less occasion still for the ladies to proceed in theirs. I should be ashamed of having more learning than my husband. And could we, do you think, help shewing a little contempt, finding ourselves superior in what the husband ought to excel in? Very few women have strength of brain equal to such a trial; and as few men would forego their lordly prerogative, and submit to a woman of better understanding, either natural or acquired. A very uncomfortable life do I see between an ignorant husband and a learned wife. Not that I would have it thought unnecessary for a woman to read, to spell, or speak English; which has been pretty much the case, hitherto. I often wonder we can converse at all; much more, that we can write to be understood. Thanks to nature for what we have! We have, there, an advantage over your sex. You are in the right to keep us in ignorance. You dare not let us try what we could do. In that you shew your judgment, which I acknowledge to be much stronger than ours, by nature; and that is all you have to boast of, and a little courage, which is oftener

shewn upon a principle of false honour, than from an innate true bravery.

My employments and amusements at this time of the year are so much the same round, though not disagreeable to me, that they are scarce worth committing to paper, except as you desire it. I rise about seven, sometimes sooner; after my private duties I read or write till nine, then breakfast; work, and converse with my company till about twelve; then, if the weather permit, walk a mile in the garden; dress, and read till dinner; after which, sit and chat till four: from that to the hour of tea-drinking, each day, variety of employments. You know what the men say enters with the tea-table; though I will venture to declare, if mine is not an exception, it is as near one as you can imagine.

Here books take place, which I often read to the company; and sometimes we all have our particular studies (sir Roger always has his), which we seldom forsake till the bell warns to supper; after which we have always something to do. We eat fruit, crack nuts, perhaps jokes; now and then music takes place. This is our regular scheme, though it is often broken into, with company and variety of incidents, some pleasing, some otherwise; domestic affairs, too, call for a share of one's time. I know not what the fine ladies mean, when they complain of having too much time; for, I thank God, Barnaby Bright is not too long for me. How should I be despised in the parish of St. James's, if they were to know that, at this time, I glory in the humble title of a cow-doctor! But no matter; if I can do good, I can bear their contempt; and return it to them with interest.

I am afraid, sir, I have given you too much trouble about the poor Magdalen. She is only qualified to wait upon an unmarried lady, or one who has a house-keeper, for she understands nothing of house-keeping; but, where needle-work, dressing, and getting up fine linen, are required, I believe she would give satisfaction.

I wish to Heaven, with you, sir, that you could, as I do, make time, or that I could give you some of mine. I want only power to send you a present which I would allow you to call bountiful. It should be another box—a contrast to Pandora's. Time, health, and happiness, should it contain, and these only

as leaders to a greater treasure: for, in the bottom, you should find a plain though distant prospect of eternal bliss. But, though I am poor in power, accept it in sincerest wishes from, good Mr. Richardson, your, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

Dear madam,

You do not approve of great learning in women. Learning in women may be either rightly or wrongly placed, according to the uses made of it by them. And if the sex is to be brought up with a view to make the individuals of it inferior in knowledge to the husbands they may happen to have, not knowing who those husbands are, or what, or whether sensible or foolish, learned or illiterate, it would be best to keep them from writing and reading, and even from the knowledge of the common idioms of speech. Would it not be very pretty for parents on both sides to make it the first subject of their inquiries, whether the girl, as a recommendation, were a greater fool, or more ignorant, than the young fellow; and if not, that they should reject her, for the booby's sake?—and would not your objection stand as strongly against a preference in mother-wit in the girl as against what is called learning; since linguists (I will not call all linguists learned men) do very seldom make the figure in conversation that even girls, from sixteen to twenty, make.

If a woman has genius, let it take its course, as well as in men; provided she neglect not any thing that is more peculiarly her province. If she has good sense, she will not make the man she chooses, who wants her knowledge, uneasy, nor despise him for that want. Her good sense will teach her what is her duty; nor will she want reminding of the tenor of her marriage vow to him. If she has not, she will find a thousand ways to plague him, though she knew not one word beyond her mother-tongue, nor how to write, read, or speak properly in that. The English, madam, and particularly what we call the plain English, is a very copious and a very expressive language.

But, dear madam, does what you say in the first part of the paragraph under my eye, limiting the genius of women, quite cohere with the advantages which, in the last part, you tell me they have over us?—"Men do well," you say, "to keep women in ignorance:" but this is not generally intended to be the case, I believe. Girls, I think you formerly said, were compounded of brittle materials. They are not, they cannot be trusted to be sent abroad to seminaries of learning, as men are. It is necessary that they should be brought up to a knowledge of the domestic duties. A young man's learning-time is from ten to twenty-five, more or less. At fifteen or sixteen, a girl starts into woman; and then she throws her purveying eyes about her: and what is the learning she is desirous to obtain?—Dear lady, discourage not the sweet souls from acquiring any learning that may keep them employed, and out of mischief, and that may divert them from attending to the whisperings within them, and to the flatteries without them, till they have taken in a due quantity of ballast, that may hinder them, all their sails unfurled and streamers flying, from being overset at their first entrance upon the voyage of life.

I am charmed with your ladyship's obliging account of your daily employments and amusements. Now do I know at what different parts of the day to obtrude myself. I was not very well this morning. My people neglected me. I was at Haigh in half a second, and did myself the honour of breakfasting there. But became the more miserable for it; for O how I missed you, on my re-transportation!—yet I the sooner recovered myself when I looked up to you and to your dear sir Roger, in the picture.—Yet the piercing cold, and the surrounding snow, and my hovered-over fireside, reminded me, that the piece before me was but a picture. In summer, if it please God to spare me till then, it will be more than a picture. I will then throw myself into your morning walks; and sometimes perhaps you shall find me perched upon one of your pieces of ruins, symbolically to make the ruin still more complete. In hopes of which, I am, &c.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

BUT what a sad thing, say you, my dear lady, that these sober men will not put on the appearance of rakes!—Silly creatures! when they know what would do!—Can't they learn to curse and swear in jest? and be good, and true, and faithful, just when a lady wants them to be good, and true, and faithful!—But you would be content, if the good men would dress, only dress like rakes—But hold! On looking back to your ladyship's letter, I find the words dress and address: "The good man need only to assume the dress and address of the rake, and you will wager ten to four that he will be preferred to him." Will you be pleased, madam, to give me particulars of the taking dress of a rake? Will you be pleased to describe the address with which the ladies in general shall be taken!—The rake is, must be, generally, in dress a coxcomb; in address, a man of great assurance: thinking highly of himself, meanly of the sex; he must be past blushing, and laugh at those who are not. He must flatter, lie, laugh, sing, caper, be a monkey, and not a man. And can a good man put on these appearances? We have heard that the devil has transformed himself into an angel of light, to bring about his purposes; but never that an angel of light borrowed a coat and waistcoat of the devil, for any purpose whatever. And must the good man thus debase himself, to stand well with the fair sex?

"To reform Lovelace for Clarissa's sake!"—Excellent ladies!—Unbounded charity!—Dear souls! How I love your six forgiving charmers!—But they acknowledge this, I hope, only among themselves!—If there are any Lovelaces of their acquaintance, I hope they give not to them such an indirect invitation to do their worst, in order to give themselves an opportunity to exercise one of the brightest graces of a Christian.

Well, but for fear I should be called scurrilous again, let me see how your ladyship explains yourself.—"A man may DESERVE the name of a rake, without being QUITE an abandoned profligate; as a man may sometimes drink A LITTLE TOO MUCH without being a sot."

And were I to attempt to draw a good man, are these, madam, the outlines of his character? Must he be a moderate rake?—Must he qualify himself for the ladies' favour by taking any liberties that are criminal? Only taking care that he stop at a few; "that he be not *quite* an *abandoned profligate*; that though he may now and then drink a little too much, yet that he stop short of the *sort*!"—O my dear lady Bradshaigh—and am I scurrilous for saying, that there is no such thing, at least that it is very difficult, so to draw a good man, that he may be thought agreeable to the ladies in general?

Did I ever tell you, madam, of the contention I had with Mr. Cibber, about the character of a good man, which he undertook to draw, and to whom, at setting out, he gave a mistress, in order to shew the virtue of his hero in parting with her, when he had fixed upon a particular lady, to whom he made honourable addresses? A male-virgin, said he—ha, ha, ha, hah! when I made my objections to the mistress, and she was another man's wife too, but ill used by her husband; and he laughed me quite out of countenance!—And it was but yesterday, in company, some of which he never was in before, that he was distinguishing upon a moderate rake (though not one word has he seen or heard of your ladyship's letter or notion), by urging, that men might be criminal without being censurable!—a doctrine that he had no doubt about, and to which he declared that none but divines and prudes would refuse to subscribe to!—Bless me, thought I!—and is this knowing the world?—What an amiable man was Mr. B——, in Pamela, in this light!

But I have this comfort, upon the whole, that I find the good man's character is not impracticable; and I think Mr. Cibber, if I can have weight with him, shall undertake the arduous task. He is as gay and as lively at seventy-nine as he was at twenty-nine; and he is a sober man, who has seen a great deal, and always dressed well, and was noted for his address, and for his success too, on two hundred and fifty occasions,—a little too many, I doubt, for a moderate rake: but then his long life must be considered. I wish we could

fix upon the number of times a man might be allowed to be overcome with wine, without being thought a sot. Once a week? Once a fortnight? Once a month? How shall we put it? Youth will have its follies. Why—but I will not ask the question I was going to ask, lest I should provoke your ladyship beyond your strength.

Dear, dear madam, let me beg of you to make your own virtuous sentiments and behaviour in life, which render you equally beloved and revered by all who have the honour to know you, the standard of virtue for all your sex. When you extend your charity too far, and allow for what is, rather than insist upon what should be, in cases of duty and of delicacy, my love for the sex makes me apply to your ladyship's words—"you provoke me beyond my strength."

Just this moment came in my wife.—(Thursday morning, eleven.)—"O, Betsy," said I, "begone! Ask me not what I am writing; I have been cutting your dear lady all to pieces."—"Dear good lady!" said she, "never will I forgive you, then." Then looking at you over the chimney, with an eye of love, and my eye following hers, "You can be but in jest," said she! "Pray make my best compliments to her ladyship, and to her sir Roger." With which I conclude, &c.

LETTER LXXIX.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

North-End, Dec. 26, 1751.

EVER obliging lady Bradshaigh! And was it, could it be, five weeks, almost six, before I paid my duty to my dearest correspondent?—How proud do you make me by your reproaches! You tell me you are angry with me! the first time I have been able to make you so.—Yet, sweet bee of Hybla! how you sting, when you tell me, that you suppose I would make no excuses for my long silence, because I would not allow of white fibs in myself!—O, my lady! how could you, and in the same sentence in which you were gracious?—but how can I cry out, though hurt, when I revolve the friendly, the condescending, the indulgent motive?

You have seen in the papers, I sup-

pose, that our friend is married; may he be happy! most cordially I wish for it: not only because he is our friend, but because he is our fellow creature. "Much depends upon the lady; and common sense will not be sufficient to make him so.—She must have sense enough to make him see, that she thinks him her superior in sense," as you once told me. Proud mortal! and vain;—And cannot he be content with the greater pride, as a man of sense would think it, to call a richer jewel than he had before, his, while he is all his own!—But, such is the nature of women, if she be not a vixen indeed, that if the man sets out right with her; if he lets her early know that he is her lord, and that she is but his vassal; and that he has a stronger sense of his prerogative than of her merit and beauty; she will succumb: and, after a few struggles, a few tears, will make him a more humble, a more passive wife, for his insolent bravery, and high opinion of himself. I am sorry to say it; but I have too often observed, that fear, as well as love, is necessary on the lady's part, to make wedlock happy; and it will generally do it, if the man sets out with asserting his power and her dependence. And now will your ladyship rise upon me! I expect it. And yet you have yourself allowed the case to be thus, with regard to this husband and his wife.

The struggle would be only at first: and if a man would be obstinate, a woman would be convinced, or seem to be so, and very possibly think the man more a man for his tyranny, and value herself when he condescended to praise or smile upon her.

I have as good a wife as man need to wish for. I believe your ladyship thinks so.—Yet—shall I say, O madam! women love not King Logs!—The dear creature, without intending contradiction, is a mistress of it. She is so good as to think me, among men, a tolerably sensible one; but that is only in general; for if we come to particulars, she will always put me right, by the superiority of her own understanding. But I am even with her very often. And how, do you ask, madam? why, by giving up my will to hers; and then the honest soul is puzzled what (in a doubtful case) to resolve upon. And, in mere

pity to her puzzlings, I have let her know my wishes; and then at once she resolves, by doing the very contrary to what she thinks them to be. And here again, I am now and then, but not often, too hard for her.—And how?—You guess, my lady.—Need I say, that it is by proposing the very contrary to what I wish;—but so much for King Log and his frog. How apt are we to bring in our own feelings, by head and shoulders, as the saying is, when we are led to it by cases either similar or opposite to our own!

But one word more of the gentleman, if you please. He may already, if not confoundedly tired of beauty (sameness is a confounded thing to a lover of variety), be growing prudent: since, I am told, that he begins to think of retiring somewhere, in order to save expense.

I was sure your ladyship would be pleased with the generosity of my hero, as shewn in the two letters I sent you. You blame me for not thinking of publishing in my life-time. You deny me assistance: you depend upon the poor old woman's blinking light; yet I wish I had had the flash of your torch to light me. If in boisterous weather a flambeau will not stand it, what can a rush-light do?

Your ladyship asks me if I would publish, if my writing ladies would give me each a letter. "Remember," say you, "that we have you in our power." Well, madam! then you will allow me to stop till you do.

Tell you sincerely, which do I think, upon the whole, men or women, have the greatest trials of patience, and which bears them the best? You mean, you say, from one sex to the other only?—What a question is here! Which? why women, to be sure. Man is an animal that must bustle in the world, go abroad, converse, fight battles, encounter other dangers of seas, winds, and I know not what, in order to protect, provide for, maintain, in ease and plenty, women. Bravery, anger, fierceness, occasionally are made familiar to them. They buffet, and are buffeted by the world; are impatient and uncontrollable. They talk of honour, and run their heads against stone walls, to make good their pretensions to it; and often quarrel with one another, and fight duels, upon any other silly thing that happens to raise

their choler ; with their shadows, if you please.

While women are meek, passive, good creatures, who, used to stay at home, set their maids at work, and formerly themselves—get their houses in order, to receive, comfort, oblige, give joy to, their fierce, fighting, bustling, active protectors, providers, maintainers—divert him with pretty pug's tricks, tell him soft tales of love, and of who and who's together, and what has been done in his absence—bring to him little master, so like his own dear papa ; and little pretty miss, a soft, sweet, smiling soul, with her sampler in her hand, so like what her meek mamma was at her years ! And with these differences in education, nature, employments, your ladyship asks, whether the man or the woman bears more from each other ? has the more patience ? Dearest lady ! how can you be so severe upon your own sex, yet seem to persuade yourself that you are defending them !

What you say of a lover's pressing his mistress to a declaration of her love for him, is sweetly pretty, and very just ; but let a man press as he will, if the lady answers him rather by her obliging manners than in words, she will leave herself something to declare, and she will find herself rather more than less respected for it : such is the nature of man !—A man hardly ever presumes to press a lady to make this declaration, but when he thinks himself sure of her. He urges her, therefore, to add to his own consequence ; and hopes to quit scores with her, when he returns love for love, and favour for favour ; and thus “ draws the tender-hearted soul to professions which she is often upbraided for all her life after,” says your ladyship. But these must be the most ungenerous of men. All I would suppose is, that pride and triumph is the meaning of the urgency for a declaration, which pride and triumph make a man think unnecessary : and perhaps to know how far he may go, and be within allowed compass. A woman, who is brought to own her love to the man, must act accordingly towards him ; must be more indulgent to him ; must, in a word, abate of her own significance, and add to his. And have you never seen a man strut upon the occasion, and how tame and bashful a woman

looks after she has submitted to make the acknowledgement ? The behaviour of each to the other, upon it and after it, justifies the caution to the sex, which I would never have a woman forget—always to leave to herself the power of granting something : yet her denials may be so managed as to be more attractive than her compliances. Women, Lovelace says (and he pretends to know them), are fond of ardours ; but there is an end of them when a lover is secure. He can then look about him, and be occasionally, if not indifferent, unpunctual, and delight in being missed, expected, and called to tender account for his careless absences : and he will be less and less solicitous about giving good reasons for them, as she is more and more desirous of his company. Poor fool ! he has brought her to own that she loves him : and will she not bear with the man she loves ? She, herself, as I have observed, will think she must act consistently with her declaration ; and he will plead that declaration in his favour, let his neglects or slights be what they will. Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXX.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

January 3, 1752.

I HOPE I shall never be more angry with my valuable correspondent than I appeared to be in my last letter ; though you love to make me angry, and you know how vindictive a heart I have : therefore do not provoke me too far. Remember, a woman is never behind-hand in revenge ; and how do you think I mean to complete it ; even by keeping my temper. If that does not vex you, I know nothing that will,

You ask, “ how could I sting, and be so gracious in the same sentence ?” Why, because I expected something in answer that would please me, and I was not disappointed. May I never want a sting to draw such honey from your pen.

Can I, do I, “ engage your delight with your attention ?” May I ever do so ; and I will take upon me to say, I shall never owe you a grain on that score.

Do you really think, sir, that “ prerogative from your sex to ours, early exerted in the married state, will sink most women into mere humble passive

wives?" How is this, "if he sets out right?"—Right! right! do you call it? Much depends upon the various tempers on both sides. Without being a vixen, indeed, a woman may behave with dignity and with duty, and, at the same time, despise the man who is mean enough to remind her of his prerogative, and that she is his vas—What is the ugly word?—I do not understand it.—Why will you write Greek to the unlearned? And ignorant I may remain; for the man, whose happy wife I am, as he never has explained it, would not willingly do it, were I to ask him. Insolent bravery, however, is plain English, and very properly applied. You have "too often observed (too often indeed, if ever) that fear as well as love is necessary, on the lady's part, to make wedlock happy." I deny not that you may have observed, that a man, by setting out right or wrong, by insolent bravery, and a high opinion of himself, may make fear necessary: nevertheless, it is a necessity of his own creating, and not from the nature of woman.

What would have become of me, had I married a man who would have endeavoured to lay me under that necessity? Endeavoured I say; for the bravest and the most insolent of your insolent sex could never have brought me to it. I am such a vixen, that if I loved my husband, I could not fear him. A governor, a parent, a master, I could love, fear, and honour, at the same time; but to my husband, myself, I must be all love, no mixture of fear; certain hatred would attend it.

How can it be said what would be the way with most women? Where there are variety of tempers, there ought to be, and you have the power to use, variety of methods. But prerogative is the word, and insolence the motive; whilst we have no choice; submission, submission for ever, or we are vixens, perverse opposers, rebels to our sovereigns, to our tyrants—too often synonymous terms. And yet, I will so far allow your observation, that some of us do seem to submit with pleasure to these sovereigns: but then, in my way of thinking, it must be a submission of love, to be called happy in the least degree; not a dispirited fear, like a—What is the meaning of that Greek word? I have a notion it is something

like servitude: O, ay: "Love, serve, honour, and obey." No fear, though, is mentioned; thank God for that; since, if there had, I should certainly have broke my marriage vow, one way or the other. There is something of "chaste conversation coupled with fear," but it is no command.

Surely, no woman of common sense could be convinced the sooner for a "man's obstinacy" in using her ill; or think him "more a man" for being a tyrant. A fool, a brute, may be a tyrant; and if a woman is not of the same silly stamp, she must despise him, however he may have brought her to a seeming easiness. We have nothing else for it, when a man is resolved. But then you cannot call it making wedlock happy: hell, indeed, sir; this world's hell, I call it. There are, who expect their wives to love, serve, honour, and obey, only because they have vowed so to do; but what men are they? And what woman could value such from her heart, or be happy with such a man?—When love is reciprocal, sweet is the bondage, and easy the yoke; where that is, nothing is wanting: for ever banished be fear, the bane of happiness in every shape; at least with one of my temper. We may be fond of power, and it is often our own fault that we have not enough of it: a woman, that can seem to despise it, may have it to satiety. And what does this argue? You per-verse souls, what does it argue?

I do believe, sir, you have as good a wife as any man "need to wish for;" and yet—What would you say? Nay, you have said. I will tell, I am resolved. Mrs. R—n, he says you are a mistress of contradiction. In close argument, you give him to understand that you think your judgment superior; that when you have brought him to declare his wishes, you at once resolve to act directly opposite. Are these things so? Positively they are not. I cannot believe it, indeed, sir. I am very sure you would not utter a falsehood, black or white; nevertheless, I cannot believe it. There is some misconstruction; some words, or tone of voice, wrong understood; mistakes on one side or the other: but, in short, she appears to me grossly abused. And yet that cannot be, by the man in whom is no abuse. I know not how to behave between you:

if I take her part, she will quarrel with me, I am sure; and if I take yours, so will you too. The third person in matrimonial disputes, always comes off the worst. So God bless you both! and I advise you to go on in the same way, lest you should change for the worse.

Have you but *now* found out the way to make me an advocate for my sex? You forget, sir, the same thing has happened before. I believe we have both owned that we love a little contradiction, as a spur to each other. So I am not only like "my wife," but like my wife's husband. In short, and seriously, we are all like one another, in some degree:—if faults we have, we had them from you. I know a gentleman, who, when he was speaking of any one who had the misfortune to be born of wicked parents, always said, "I have no opinion of him; he is made of bad stuff." And this puts me in mind of our original, the *rib*, the *rib*! And there's a *bone* for you to pick! Pardon the pun, and pertness.

No, sir, I cannot hope that what I have said will amount to a proof of women's superiority, in goodness, to men; any more than I hope for an acknowledgment of it without a proof. Nevertheless, as you have more power and do very often abuse that power, we, without doubt, have more to bear from you, than you from us. Without doubt, I say; because you cannot make me believe otherwise.

And have I, do you think, "been severe upon my own sex, yet seem to persuade myself that I was defending them?"

What a blundering brain have I! for ever producing dirt to be thrown in my own face! Though, please to hold your hand a little, for I am not yet sensible of what you accuse me. If any being but man could speak, I would allow that being to talk of women's consciences.

I once had some small acquaintance with lord Orrery, at the time when he was in disgrace with his father, his doating father, as you gently term him—for he had not so just an excuse as dotage, for his behaviour to his son.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXI.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

North-Find, Feb. 23, 1752.

I KNEW that I should provoke my dear correspondent, by what I wrote of men's setting out right in the marriage warfare; of governing by fear; of prerogative early exerted; and such like strange assertions. But, in the first place, you will be pleased to recollect to whom all this jargon is owing. Is it not to lady B—— herself? Look back, madam, for the occasion, which was our friend ——'s nuptials: and what a passive, tame soul you supposed his wife must be, if she wished to be happy. On this, my indignation arose against tyrants; and I gave it as my opinion, that such would be much more likely to be observed, than the kind, good-natured husband, who made it his study to oblige his wife: and angry, very angry, was I, against such of the sex as would, either way, give reason for the observation. Had I not been a lover of your wayward sex, I should not have been so warm against them as you take it I was.

Your ladyship very happily expresses yourself, when you say, "a governor, a parent, a master, I could love, fear, and honour, at the same time: but to my husband, myself, I must be all love, no mixture of fear: certain hatred would attend it." A husband was formerly thought a governor; you have heard or read that he was called master: he is dearer than a parent, and nearer too. Be pleased to tell me, madam, why fear should mingle with your love to an indulgent parent, and produce hatred to a husband? Will you be pleased to shew me in what the two sorts of fear, if two sorts there be, differ? As to the words myself, my husband, myself, they have a pretty sound with them; but they will be found very separable words. In short, that the solemn office, that has made them one flesh, has not been able, even in very material cases, to make them one spirit; and, when they differ, if there be not a fear of offending, God help them! God help *the myself*!

"While they behold their chaste conversation, coupled with fear." That text had like to have overturned all your ladyship's reasoning; and how came you off? Prettily enough; because you were re-

solved to come off, and could easily convince yourself. It is no command, say you. But, madam, it is almost as bad for your argument, for it is a supposed unquestionable duty: yet I plead not for fear. My maxim is love, all love; and yet, when a woman is used to it, she expects it, and so considers it not either as a rarity or an obligation. The man is a quiet, good-natured creature, and loves his peace, and so is loving for his own sake. Strange humility that, which will make a woman think that she can repay the obligation by her acceptance of it! One thing, however, madam, let me tell you, that, in all our arguments of this nature, I will not allow you to look at home, and determine by yourself. You can know nothing of the world, nor of the argument, if you form your conclusions upon the conduct of a single pair.

And when I have mentioned my wife and *her myself*, it is not that I would reflect upon her, as either designing to be contradictory, or as being unusually so. No, madam, she falls into it naturally, as I may say, and as if she could not help it. And as *her myself* always prefaces his requests as if he would take her compliances as favours, he often finds it is but asking for a denial; and why? Because she would demonstrate that she has as great an aversion to the word fear as the best of her sex; and hesitates not to oppose, as an argument of her fortitude and independence of will. But what will you, who are so vehement against the word and thing fear, say, if I should assert, that there cannot be love without fear? You say, you could fear a parent, yet honour and love that parent: I would rather, methinks, be the father than the husband of the woman, who could not fear me with the same sort of fear, that she could shew to a fond and indulgent parent. And there, to return your ladyship's words, is a bone for you to pick!

I do not perfectly understand you, madam, in the following sentence: "We may be fond of power; and it is often our own fault that we have not enough of it. A woman that can seem to despise it, may have it to satiety. And what does this argue? You perverse souls, what does it argue?"

Again, your ladyship is a little unintelligible:—"If faults we have (as if

you made a question of it, madam!), we have them from you.—And this puts me in mind of our original: the rib, the rib." I thought it was Eve that gave the man the apple. I have not my Bible at hand: but I think I remember some such words as these of an apostle: "Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression."—"You have more to bear from us," you say, "than we have from you."—To this I wrote largely in my last.

You have not, madam, a blundering brain: and I hope I have not thrown dirt in my correspondent's face.

Your ladyship dares me to stop in my new work! You give me leave to stop. Your challenge, perhaps, comes in a critical time; for I am at a part, that it is four chances to one I shall not be able to get over. You cannot imagine how many difficult situations I have involved myself in. Entanglement, and extrication, and re-entanglement, have succeeded each other, as the day the night; and now the few friends, who have seen what I have written, doubt not but I am stuck fast. And, indeed, I think so myself.

I have read through lord Orrery's History of Swift. I greatly like it. I had the pleasure of telling my lord himself so, in Mr. Millar's shop, and of thanking him for the pleasure he had given me. He returned the compliment, in relation to Clarissa; and, having heard of my new design, was inquisitive about it. Though my lord is really in his person and behaviour, as well as in his writings, an amiable man, I join with your ladyship most cordially in all you say of the author, of the dean, and of the dean's savage behaviour to his unhappy wife, and Vanessa; as it is of a piece with all those of his writings, in which he endeavours to debase the human and to raise above it the brutal nature. I cannot think so hardly as some do of lord Orrery's observation; that the fearful deprivation, which reduced him to a state beneath that of the merest animal, seemed to be a punishment that had terrible justice in it.

Why will you so ungratefully depreciate a pen and a judgment, that every one, to whom I have read detached parts of your favours to me, admires? Take care, madam, how you make light of ta-

lents, of which while you think meanly, you are not likely to be duly thankful for. Your judgment of the works you have remarked upon are, by all who have heard me read them, thought admirable; and shew a heart, as well as a head, for which you cannot be too grateful.

I have not been able to read any more than the first volume of *Amelia*. Poor *Fielding*! I could not help telling his sister, that I was equally surprised at and concerned for his continued lowness. Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner at a spunging-house, we should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantage of a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company; but it is beyond my conception, that a man of family, and who had some learning, and who really is a writer, should descend so excessively low in all his pieces. Who can care for any of his people? A person of honour asked me the other day, what he could mean by saying, in his *Covent Garden Journal*, that he had followed *Homer* and *Virgil* in his *Amelia*. I answered, that he was justified in saying so, because he must mean *Cotton's Virgil Travestied*; where the women are drabs, and the men scoundrels.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

April 22, 1752.

A SENTIMENT, my dear and good lady *Bradshaigh*, may not be absolutely unexceptionable, and yet be very happily expressed. My meaning and my words agreed, when I wrote, that you very happily expressed yourself on the subject of love and fear, as applicable to a parent and a husband.

But you are at a loss how to make me understand you as to the two sorts of fear which you want to distinguish, the one to a parent, the other to a husband. Awe, the word awe, is happily thought of by your ladyship. "Are we not bred up with awe to a parent? (you ask.) Certainly (say you); and it is often created by our being sensible we are liable to be corrected." So, madam, a wife (and who is perfect? who wants not some correction?) having no apprehen-

sion of being corrected, of being chidden, therefore, cannot fear her husband, as when a child she could a parent! You have most charmingly strengthened my argument: I thank you, madam. Did I not say, that a mixture of fear with the love was necessary to make an obliging wife? And do you not hint, that if the wife had the same motive for it as the child had, fear of rebuke, of chastisement, of correction (by which I mean not stripes, you may be sure—indulgent parents maintain not their authority by stripes), the husband might be entitled to the same kind of awe that the parent was; and it would be no discredit to the grown-up woman, the wife, to be as much afraid of offending a kind, a good husband, as, when a child, she was of offending a kind, an indulgent parent? I was not wrong, therefore, I think, when I asked your ladyship why fear should mingle with your love of an indulgent parent (for that was the parent I meant, and not the severe one), and produce hatred to a husband? You will answer me as above. Your ladyship knows your answer. The wife has no apprehension of being corrected; if chidden, she can chide again. Nor, as your ladyship seems to have proved, was I much out of the way when I observed, from what your ladyship said of the temper of your then lately-married friend, though I said it with indignation against such tyrant husbands; that such would be much more likely to be observed, than the kind, good-natured man, who made it his study to oblige his wife. Upon the whole, if your ladyship will give me leave, I will assert, that there hardly can be love without fear—fear of offending. And I repeat, "that I would rather be the father than the husband of the woman who could not fear me with the same sort of fear, that she could shew to a fond and indulgent parent. Why, madam, I can, on the same motives, fear my wife; but I am not sure, good creature, good wife, as she really is, that I have shewn my prudence in letting her see my fear.

"But you say that the woman is under no obligation to her husband for his love, provided she loves. With all my heart, madam? I will not make distinctions; I will not say that there is a merit in the man's love to a single object, on a supposition that the law of nature discourages

not polygamy, and that the law of God nowhere in his word condemns it. No, I will not; because the law of his country ought to determine him. Why, why would your ladyship throw out bones for so spiteful, so vengeful, a man to pick? But may I not ask, that, if the man who loves, loves for his own sake, whether the woman who loves, loves not also the man chiefly for hers? Yes, says your ladyship, methinks: and so the obligation is equal; so be it.

Want of perspicuity is not by any means the fault of your ladyship's writing: yet I really did not take your meaning in the passage relating to the power that women might have if they sought it. I meant not in that place to provoke you, dearly as I sometimes love to try to make you angry with me, which yet I never could do, though I have very, very often, deserved your anger. Thus you explain yourself:

"You said, we were dear lovers of power. I did not deny it; and I thought it our own fault that we had not enough of it." And have not your sex here in England enough of it? That fault is letting you see we are fond of it. Bless me, madam, should we not feel it, if we did not see it? "For which reason, such is your pride, you will not allow us any, if you can help it," adds your ladyship. If we can help it! that is power with a vengeance which a wife exerts, and a husband cannot help himself.

"Again unintelligible (says your ladyship: Fie upon you!). Why we have faults: I made no question of it. How should we be faultless, considering our original? Was not woman made of man? From whence, then, our faults?" But, madam, be so good as to consider, that man, at the time woman was formed out of his rib, was in a state of innocence. He had not fallen. The devil had need of a helper: he soon found one in Eve. But, if I may be forgiven for a kind of pun, you seem to think, madam, that the faults of men lie in the flesh, the faults of women are deeper—they lie in the bone. I believe you have hit upon it. I love to provoke you, it is true; but I also love to agree with your ladyship, in material articles. The difference between us, in this point, is, that I confirm by experience what you advance only from conjecture; for, unless you look out of yourself, how should you know that wo-

men's faults lie so deep that they must be unformed, and new made up again, to amend them?

The fault of the great author, whose letters to his friend you have been reading, is, that Tully is wholly concerned for the fame of Cicero; and that for fame and for self-exaltation's sake. In some of his orations, what is called his vehemence (but really is too often insult and ill-manners) so transports him, that a modern pleader, and yet these are often intolerably abusive, would not be heard, if he were to take the like freedoms. This difference, however, ought to be mentioned, to the honour of the ancient; he generally, I believe, being governed by the justice of his cause. The moderns too seldom regard that at all; and care for nothing but their fees. But, after all, Cicero's constitutional faults seem to be vanity and cowardice. Great geniuses seldom have *small* faults.

You have seen, I presume, Dr. Middleton's Life of Cicero. It is a fine piece; but the doctor, I humbly think, has played the panegyrist, in some places in it, rather than the historian. The present laureat's performance on the same subject, of which Dr. Middleton's is the foundation, is a spirited and pretty piece. He makes his observations on the character of Cicero, not by controverting any point with the doctor; but, taking for granted, as if he had no other lights, ever thing that the doctor advances in his favour.

You greatly oblige me, madam, whenever you give me your observations upon what you read. Cicero was a prodigy. His works, his genius, will be admired to the end of time. But he was the greatest, the grossest lover, courtier of adulation, and one of the greatest dastards, that ever lived. Yet, in the former quality, he only spoke out what many others mean. He was fond of glory; he could not but be conscious of his very great talents. I have often quarrels, arising in my mind, against the affectation of some ingenious moderns, who are always seeking to disclaim merits, which, were they in earnest, their modesty would not permit them to publish to the world as they do in the treatises which they give the public. There may be a manly sensibility, surely, expressed, which yet may shew, that though the author of a work, or the performer

of a good action, is tolerably skilled in his subject, or can take delight in his beneficence; yet that he is not proud of understanding or doing what he ought to understand or do, if he pretends to write or to act. I am not a little embarrassed in my new piece (so I was in my two former) with the affectation that custom almost compels one to be guilty of:—to make my characters disclaim the merits of the good they do, or the knowledge they pretend to; and to be afraid of reporting the praises due, and given to them by others, who are benefited either by the act or the example, although the praises given are as much to the honour of the giver's sensibility, as of the receiver's. Does any body believe these disclaimers? Does not every body think them affected, and often pharisaical? and even their pretences to modesty, are what Lovelace calls, traps laid for praise! Yet custom exacts them; and who is great enough to be above custom? I think I would wish that my good man, and even my good girl, should be thought to be above regarding this custom. To receive praise with a grace, is a grace. But it must be so received, as that it should not be thought to puff up or exalt the person in his own opinion. The person praised must shew, that he is sensible he has done no more than his duty; that he gave not himself either his talents, or his ability to do good; and should be the more humble, the more thankful for those talents, and for that ability. Arrogance, self-conceit, must be banished his heart. Even Lovelace can say, "If I have any thing valuable as to intellectuals, those are not my own; and to be proud of what a man is answerable for the abuse of, and has no merit in the right use of, is to strut, like the jay, in a borrowed plumage."

I really think my lord Orrery, in his Life of Swift, has intended to be laudably impartial. I have no notion of that friendship, which makes a man think himself obliged to gloss over the faults of a man, whom he wishes not to have great ones. It is not a strong proof of the sacred authority of the Scriptures, that the histories of David, Solomon, and its other heroes, are handed down to us with their mixture of vices and virtues? Lord Orrery says very high and very great things of Swift. The bad ones we

knew, in part, before. Had he attempted to whiten them over, would it not have weakened the credibility of what he says in his favour? I am told, that my lord is mistaken in some of his facts; for instance, in that wherein he asserts, that Swift's learning was a late acquirement. I am very well warranted by the son of an eminent divine, a prelate, who was for three years what is called his *chum*, in the following account of that fact:—Dr. Swift made as great a progress in his learning, at the University of Dublin, in his youth, as any of his contemporaries; but was so very ill-natured and troublesome, that he was made *Terra Filius* (sir Roger will explain what that means, if your ladyship is unacquainted with the University term), on purpose to have a pretence to expel him. He raked up all the scandal against the heads of that University that a severe inquirer, and a still severer temper, could get together into his harangue. He was expelled in consequence of his abuse, and, having his *decessit*, afterwards got admitted, at Oxford, to his degrees.

I cannot find that my lord was very intimate with him. As from a man of quality; and the son of a nobleman who had been obnoxious to ministers, no doubt but the dean might countenance those professions of friendship, which the young lord might be forward to make to a man, who was looked upon as the genius of Ireland, and the fashion. But he could be only acquainted with him in the decline of the dean's genius.

My lord, I think, has partly drawn censure upon himself, by a little piece of affectation. *My friends* will, he says, by way of preface to some of the things that the friends of Swift think the severest. I was a little disgusted, as I read it, at these ill-placed assumptions of friendship in words. I thought these affectations below lord Orrery, as it seemed, by them, as if he was proud of being thought of as a friend, by the man, who, whatever his head was, had not, I am afraid, near so good a heart as his own.

Mr. Temple, nephew to sir William Temple, and brother to lord Palmerston, who lately died at Bath, declared, to a friend of mine, that sir William hired Swift, at his first entrance into the world, to read to him, and sometimes to be his amanuensis, at the rate of 20*l.* a year and his board, which was then high pre-

ferment to him ; but that sir William never favoured him with his conversation, because of his ill qualities, nor allowed him to sit down at table with him. Swift, your ladyship will easily see by his writings, had bitterness, satire, moroseness, that must make him insufferable, both to equals and inferiors, and unsafe for his superiors to countenance. Sir William Temple was a wise and discerning man. He could easily see through a young fellow taken into a low office, and inclined to forget himself. Probably, too, the dean was always unpolite, and never could be a man of breeding. Sir William Temple was one of the politest men of his time.

Whoever the lady be, who is so severe upon lord Orrery, I cannot but think that she is too severe. The story of Swift's marriage, and behaviour to a worthy, very worthy wife, I have been told long before lord Orrery's history of him came out. It was not, as the angry lady charges, a chimæra, but a certain truth. And this I was informed of by a lady of goodness, and no enemy but to what was bad in Swift. Surely this lady, who calls my lord to account for his unchristian-like usage of a dead friend, should have shewn a little more of the Christian in her invectives. Near twenty years ago, I heard from a gentleman, now living, with whom Vanessa lived, or lodged, in England, an account of the dean's behaviour to the unhappy woman, much less to his reputation than the account my lord gives of that affair. According to this gentleman's account, she was not the creature that she became when she was in Ireland, whither she followed him, and, in hopes to make herself an interest with his vanity, threw herself into glare and expense ; and, at last, by disappointment, into a habit of drinking, till grief and the effects of that vice destroyed her. You may gather from that really pretty piece of his, Cadenus and Vanessa, how much he flattered her, and that he took great pains to gloss over that affair. I remember once to have seen a little collection of letters and poetical scraps of Swift's, which passed between him and Mrs. Van Homrigh, this same Vanessa, which the bookseller then told me were sent him to be published, from the originals, by this lady, in resentment of his perfidy.

I have not had an opportunity to know what the two doctors you mention say of lord Orrery's Life of Swift.

Adieu, dear madam, yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

June 24, 1757.

YOUR ladyship is sure that you love, and as sure that you do not fear. Bless me, madam, did I not except, from my general observation, a certain baronet and his lady ?

"A thoughtless irresolute child ;" as if thoughtlessness and irresolution were not to be found in persons grown up !

The wife you describe, the good, the tender wife, who will never designedly offend a good, a tender husband, is not the wife I, any more than your ladyship, thought of: the generality of the sex I had in my view. And yet I think the fear I meant very compatible with the character of a good, a tender wife ; nay, she hardly can be either good or tender without it.

"Want correction equally, or in comparison with a child." That, madam, was not what I supposed, though I have known humoured wives more perverse than babies. Nor meant I that stripes should be thought of: and yet in a cause that I once heard argued in the house of lords, between sir Cleeve Moore and his lady, who, in resentment of his cruelty, had run away from him, and whom he had forced back, with farther instances of cruelty, I heard a very edifying debate: a cause which was managed by the present lord chancellor, then attorney-general, against the late lord chancellor Talbot, then solicitor-general, in which the former declaimed very powerfully against sir Cleeve for his ill usage of his wife. The latter, allowing part of the charge, justified sir Cleeve by the law of England, which allows a man to give his wife *moderate correction*. The house was crowded with ladies, who, some of them, shrugged their shoulders, as if they felt the correction ; and all of them, who could look from behind their fans, leered consciously, I thought, at one another. A pretty doctrine ! thought I. Take it among you, ladies ; and make your best courtesies when you come home to your emperors.

Well, but your ladyship turns me over to St. John, who, in his first epistle says : " There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment : He that feareth, is not made perfect in love."

Charming ! And how your ladyship exults upon this ! " What will you say to this, I wonder ?"

Why, madam, in the first place, I say, that this love and this fear, as you will see in the context, are not meant to be the love or fear of an earthly creature, a husband, or that of a wife—but of God.

But when another apostle comes, from the same Divine Spirit, to speak of the duty of wives to husbands, he delivers himself with the authority of a precept : —" Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands ; that if any obey not the word, they may also, without the word, be won by the conversation of the wives ; while they behold your conversation coupled with fear." This, madam, is directly *to* wives, and *of* husbands. What now will your ladyship say to these things ? But I am meek ; I exult not ; no broad smile do I put on : no triumph !

A meek and quiet spirit is enjoined as the principal ornament of a wife ; " for, after this manner (says the apostle), in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord ; whose daughters ye are, as long as you do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." There, madam, is the fear, that a wife should mingle with her love, described. It should be a sweet, familiar fear, looking up to him for encouragement and reward, from his smiles ; and not such a one as should awe, confound, or amaze her.—So much for this subject of love and fear.

" No, sir (says your ladyship), never, never, will I allow, that a woman is under obligations to her husband, for returning her love ; no, not for his entire love !"—I cannot help it, madam : you see what a state of vassalage both the Scripture and the law of the land suppose a wife to be in ; and what stately creatures men are ! But you know that I enforce not this vassalage, this stateliness. This argument was introduced with my declared indignation against the tyranny of a husband, who, of your

own knowledge of his temper, you supposed would be a tyrant, and expect his sweetly pretty wife to be will-less. A sad thing, whatever it was of old time (in Sarah's days), when the wives were thought of little account, and the old patriarchs lorded it over half a score good, meek, obedient creatures, to deprive a woman, in these days, of her will ! Whence I had the boldness to advance, that it was, however, very likely, that the man would have the more obliging wife for it ; and I thought your ladyship, by giving the instance, of the same opinion. Said you not, " that humility only could make her happy ?"

Polygamy is a doctrine, that I am very far from countenancing ; but yet, in an argumentative way, I do say, that the law of nature, and the first command (increase and multiply), more than allow of it ; and the law of God nowhere forbids it. Throughout the Old Testament, we find it constantly practised. Enough, however, of this subject ; though a great deal more might be said ; more than I wish there could ; as I think highly of the laws and customs of my country. Have you, madam, who are an admirer of Milton, read his *Treatise on Divorees* ? You reject his authority. As a poet, do if you please : poets are allowed to be licentious. But reason ought to weigh, whether from man or woman. Do you not think so, madam ?

Bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh—Why, truly, so women are—But, as the best things, corrupted, become the worst, your ladyship would have a difficulty, if put to it, to prove, that the offspring cannot be worse, when bad, than the parent.

I have overcome, it is true, some difficulties in my new work ; but what shall I do, they multiply upon me !——Adieu, for the present.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

July 25, 1755.

YOU are so kind, and so pressing, to give yourself trouble on our account, that I know not what to say to you. Sir Roger cries, That your being a man of business, and diligent in that business, is a reason why we should not add to that

weight you already bear. I answer, Consider his words, and consider his sincerity. Aye, but then consider what he will endure to serve his friends. Well, and is not that the business of his life, preferably to all others? Very true. And if I know him at all, the pleasure he takes in that servitude will greatly overbalance the trouble; so let us only think of giving him a pleasure, and let that solve to ourselves, like all selfish people, what perhaps would more than appear as really giving trouble to a disinterested stander-by.—And so, sir, you are adopted our friendly, loving, trusty banker.

I have a notion that you are acquainted with honest people of every profession; therefore you must not be surprised if I apply to you upon all occasions. And this puts me in mind of Mr. C——, who, honest and humane as he is, may, nevertheless, be the better for your acquaintance. You once told me he maintained a very odd argument; and I am informed, his principles are so in the religious sense:—but if he is not one of the obstinate, and will hear reason, his correspondence with you may open his eyes, and cause a new light to shine before them.

Bless me, sir, how you scold! I have a great mind not to bear it. I desired you would not be very angry; and I thought you would not, when I told you the true reason of my reserve. My letter, like some former ones, was left at Parson's-Green, where you answered it, or you would have been more gentle in your condemnation. Pray look it over, before you write again, and tell me if I did not say that "Miss Talbot seems very agreeable, and deserving, and, I dare say, is as good as you and all her friends think her; and, that her looks answered her character, is too well known to need farther explanation." This you call cool praise. I do not think it so, from a stranger; for, you know, I cannot commence acquaintance all at once. You prepared miss Talbot to expect that shyness, that unconquerable shyness, which appears so much to my disadvantage in a first visit. But you also prepared her—Ah, sir, no rising in the second visit! However, I thank you, since I must have appeared worse, had she not been prepared, and which I am sensible of, by her expressions in my favour, of which I am vain. The diffidence she

found out, pleases me; and I hope that will be an excuse for all my disagreeable and ill-timed reserves. Thus far I am willing to take blame to myself. The married lady ought to have made more advances. But the married lady, upon some occasions, is an arrant sheep's-face. I can only promise to behave better for the future, and shall very much wish for an opportunity to make myself more deserving the good opinion of miss Talbot, who, I do assure you, stands high in mine.

I have but lately finished Leland's excellent work, and your kind present. I greatly admire the plain, easy style in which he writes. His cool, mild, and impartial arguments, to me, at least, who was prepared to receive them favourably, seem strong and satisfactory: and my lord of Bolingbroke, with all his vast capacity, but vaster assurance, he often makes appear even an idiot; and that without any glare of wit or brow-beating language, like his lordship's, but only by explaining and undressing his ornamented, ill-designed doctrine.

I had, last post, a letter from my dear sister ——, with three enclosed from lady S——g to her; in whose praises, perhaps, she might think me too cool: indeed, I said but little in the complimenting strain. She seems bent upon making me love her; and, if she is sincere in her professions of friendship, I do love her for that. But, from my own knowledge of her, from one hour's knowledge, what judgment could I form? Perhaps, if any, it might be to the disadvantage of the lady, and very unjustly; first appearances are often false. I have a reason, however, for hoping so, which may make me appear cool, when I am only cautious. This is not a farther excuse for my behaviour to the lady before-mentioned, towards whom my heart is strongly bent, and whose character, had I never seen her, would have demanded my love and esteem. I am sure she is deserving; I hope the other is so too.

Sir Roger and I are quite alone, and the weather so extremely bad that I have not had an opportunity of even walking in the garden these three weeks, which make this place not quite so pleasant as usual. But here I am happy, nevertheless; am pretty well in health, though cannot say it is quite established: but I

have no great cause for complaint, God be praised. I want nothing but a few of my particular friends; in the first rank of whom stands a family at Parson's Green, whose company would add greatly to the satisfaction of their obliged, &c.

FROM THE
LETTERS OF EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.

LETTER LXXXV.

Mr. Gibbon to his Father.

1760.

Dear sir,

AN address in writing, from a person who has the pleasure of being with you every day, may appear singular. However, I have preferred this method, as upon paper I can speak without a blush, and be heard without interruption. If my letter displeases you, impute it, dear sir, only to yourself. You have treated me, not like a son, but like a friend. Can you be surprised that I should communicate to a friend all my thoughts, and all my desires? Unless the friend approve them, let the father never know them; or, at least, let him know, at the same time, that, however reasonable, however eligible, my scheme may appear to me, I would rather forget it for ever, than cause him the slightest uneasiness.

When I first returned to England, attentive to my future interest, you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in parliament. This seat, it was supposed, would be an expense of fifteen hundred pounds. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that, by the means of this seat, I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. But I soon perceived how little a mere virtuous inclination, unassisted by talents, could contribute towards that great end; and a very short examination discovered to me, that those talents had not fallen to my lot. Do not, dear sir, impute this declaration to a false modesty, the meanest species of pride. Whatever else I may

be ignorant of, I think I know myself, and shall always endeavour to mention my good qualities without vanity, and my defects without repugnance. I shall say nothing of the most intimate acquaintance with his country and language, so absolutely necessary to every senator. Since they may be acquired, to allege my deficiency in them, would seem only the plea of laziness. But I shall say with great truth, that I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labour may improve, but which nature alone can bestow. That my temper, quiet, retired, somewhat reserved, could neither acquire popularity, bear up against opposition, nor mix with ease in the crowds of public life. That even my genius (if you will allow me any) is better qualified for the deliberate compositions of the closet, than for the extemporary discourses of the parliament. An unexpected objection would disconcert me; and as I am incapable of explaining to others, what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating while I ought to be answering. I even want necessary prejudices of party and of nation. In popular assemblies, it is often necessary to inspire them; and never orator inspired well a passion, which he did not feel himself. Suppose me even mistaken in my own character; to set out with the repugnance such an opinion must produce, offers but an indifferent prospect. But I hear you say, it is not necessary that every man should enter into parliament with such exalted hopes. It is to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives in the service of one's friends. Such motives, though not glorious, yet are not dishonourable; and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expense, or if our fortune enabled us to despise that expense, then, indeed, I should think them of the greatest strength. But with our private fortune, is it worth while to purchase, at so high a rate, a title, honourable in itself, but which I must share with every fellow that can lay out fifteen hundred pounds? Besides, dear sir, a merchandise is of little value to the owner when he is resolved not to sell it.

I should affront your penetration, did I not suppose you now see the drift of

this letter. It is to appropriate, to another use, the sum with which you destined to bring me into parliament; to employ it, not in making me great, but in rendering me happy. I have often heard you say yourself, that the allowance you had been so indulgent as to grant me, though very liberal in regard to your estate, was yet but small, when compared with the almost necessary extravagances of the age. I have, indeed, found it so, notwithstanding a good deal of economy, and an exemption from many of the common expenses of youth. This, dear sir, would be a way of supplying these deficiencies, without any additional expense to you.—But I forbear.—If you think my proposals reasonable, you want no entreaties to engage you to comply with them; if otherwise, all will be without effect.

All that I am afraid of, dear sir, is, that I should seem not so much asking a favour, as this really is, as exacting a debt. After all I can say, you will still remain the best judge of my good, and your own circumstances. Perhaps, like most landed gentlemen, an addition to my annuity would suit you better, than a sum of money given at once; perhaps the sum itself may be too considerable. Whatever you shall think proper to bestow upon me, or in whatever manner, will be received with equal gratitude.

I intended to stop here; but, as I abhor the least appearance of art, I think it will be better to lay open my whole scheme at once. The unhappy war, which now desolates Europe, will oblige me to defer seeing France till a peace. But that reason can have no influence upon Italy, a country which every scholar must long to see: should you grant my request, and not disapprove of my manner of employing your bounty, I would leave England this autumn, and pass the winter at Lausanne, with M. de Voltaire and my old friends. The armies no longer obstruct my passage, and it must be indifferent to you whether I am at Lausanne or at London during the winter, since I shall not be at Beriton. In the spring I would cross the Alps, and, after some stay in Italy, as the war must then be terminated, return home through France, to live happily with your and my dear mother. I am now two-and-twenty; a tour must take up a considerable time; and though I believe

you have no thoughts of settling [me soon (and I am sure I have not), yet so many things may intervene, that the man, who does not travel early, runs a great risk of not travelling at all. But this part of my scheme, as well as the whole, I submit entirely to you.

Permit me, dear sir, to add, that I do not know whether the complete compliance with my wishes could increase my love and gratitude; but that I am very sure no refusal could diminish those sentiments with which I shall always remain, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

Beriton, April 29, 1767.

Dear Holroyd,

I HAPPENED to-night to stumble upon a very odd piece of intelligence in the *St. James's Chronicle*; it related to the marriage of a certain Monsieur Olroy, formerly captain of hussars. I do not know how it came into my head that this captain of hussars was not unknown to me, and that he might possibly be an acquaintance of yours. If I am not mistaken in my conjecture, pray give my compliments to him, and tell him from me, that I am at least as well pleased that he is married as if I were so myself. Assure him, however, that though as a philosopher I may prefer celibacy, yet, as a politician, I think it highly proper that the species should be propagated by the usual method; assure him even that I am convinced, that if celibacy is exposed to fewer miseries, marriage can alone promise real happiness, since domestic enjoyments are the source of every other good. May such happiness, which is bestowed on few, be given to him; the transient blessings of beauty, and the more durable ones of fortune, good sense, and an amiable disposition.

I can easily conceive, and as easily excuse you, if you have thought mighty little this winter of your poor rusticated friend. I have been confined ever since Christmas, and confined by a succession of very melancholy occupations. I had scarcely arrived at Beriton, where I proposed staying only about a fortnight, when a brother of Mrs. Gibbon's died

unexpectedly, though after a very long and painful illness. We were scarcely recovered from the confusion, which such an event must produce in a family, when my father was taken dangerously ill, and with some intervals has continued so ever since. I can assure you, my dear Holroyd, that the same event appears in a very different light when the danger is serious and immediate; or when, in the gaiety of a tavern dinner, we affect an insensibility, that would do us no great honour were it real. My father is now much better; but I have since been assailed by a severe stroke—the loss of a friend. You remember, perhaps, an officer of our militia, whom I sometimes used to compare to yourself. Indeed, the comparison would have done honour to any one. His feelings were tender and noble, and he was always guided by them: his principles were just and generous, and he acted up to them. I shall say no more, and you will excuse my having said so much, of a man with whom you were unacquainted; but my mind is just now so very full of him, that I cannot easily talk, or even think, of any thing else. If I know you right, you will not be offended at my *weakness*.

What rather adds to my uneasiness, is the necessity I am under of joining our militia the day after to-morrow. Though the lively hurry of such a scene might contribute to divert my ideas, yet every circumstance of it, and the place itself (which was that of his residence), will give me many a painful moment. I know nothing would better raise my spirits than a visit from you: the request may appear unseasonable, but I think I have heard you speak of *an uncle* you had near Southampton. At all events, I hope you will snatch a moment to write to me, and give me some account of your present situation and future designs. As you are now fettered, I should expect you will not be such a *hic et ubique*, as you have been since your arrival in England. I stay at Southampton from the first to the twenty-eighth of May, and then propose making a short visit to town: if you are any where in the neighbourhood of it you may depend upon seeing me. I shall then concert measures for seeing a little more of you next winter than I have lately done, as I hope to take a pretty long spell in town. I suppose Guise has often fallen in your

way: he has never once written to me, nor I to him: in the country we want materials, and in London we want time. I ought to recollect, that you even want time to read my unmeaning scrawl. Believe, however, my dear Holroyd, that it is the sincere expression of a heart entirely yours.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

October 6, 1771.

Dear Holroyd,

I sit down to answer your epistle, after taking a very pleasant ride.—A ride! and upon what?—Upon a horse.—*You lie!*—I don't.—I have got a droll little poney, and intend to renew the long forgotten practice of equitation, as it was known in the world before the second of June of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. As I used to reason against riding, so I can now argue for it; and indeed the principal use I know in human reason is, when called upon, to furnish arguments for what we have an inclination to do.

What do you mean by presuming to affirm, that I am of no use here? Farmer Gibbon of no use? *Last week* I sold all my hops, and I believe well, at nine guineas a hundred, to a very responsible man. Some people think I might have got more at Weyhill fair, but that would have been an additional expense, and a great uncertainty. Our quantity has disappointed us very much; but I think, that besides hops for the family, there will not be less than 500*l.*;—no contemptible sum off thirteen small acres, and two of them planted last year only. *This week* I let a little farm in Petersfield by auction, and propose raising it from 25*l.* to 35*l.* per annum:—and farmer Gibbon of no use!

To be serious: I have but one reason for resisting your invitation and my own wishes; that is, Mrs. Gibbon I left nearly alone all last winter, and shall do the same this. She submits very cheerfully to that state of solitude; but, on sounding her, I am convinced that she would think it unkind were I to leave her at present. I know you so well, that I am sure you will acquiesce in this reason;

and let me make my next visit to Sheffield Place from town, which I think may be a little before Christmas. I should like to hear something of the precise time, duration, and extent of your intended tour into Bucks. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

*Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.
at Edinburgh.*

Bentinck Street, Aug. 7, 1773.

Dear Holroyd,

I BEG ten thousand pardons for not being dead, as I certainly ought to be. But such is my abject nature, that I had rather live in Bentinck Street, attainted and convicted of the sin of laziness, than enjoy your applause either at Old Nick's or even in the Elysian Fields. After all, could you expect that I should honour with my correspondence a wild barbarian of the bogs of Erin? Had the natives intercepted my letter, the terrors occasioned by such unknown magic characters might have been fatal to you. But now you have escaped the fury of their hospitality, and are arrived among a cee-vi-leezed nation, I may venture to renew my intercourse.

You tell me of a long list of dukes, lords, and chieftains of renown, to whom you are introduced; were I with you, I should prefer one *David* to them all. When you are at Edinburgh, I hope you will not fail to visit the sty of that fattest of Epicurus's hogs, and inform yourself whether there remains no hope of its recovering the use of its right paw. There is another animal of *great*, though not perhaps of *equal*, and certainly not of *similar* merit, one Robertson: has he almost created the new world? Many other men you have undoubtedly seen, in the country where you are at present, who must have commanded your esteem: but when you return, if you are not very honest, you will possess great advantages over me in any dispute concerning Caledonian merit.

Boodle's and Atwood's are now no more. The last stragglers, and Godfrey Clarke in the rear of all, are moved away to their several castles; and I now enjoy, in the midst of London, a delicious solitude. My library, Kensington Gardens, and a few parties with new acquaintance

who are chained to London (among whom I reckon Goldsmith and sir Joshua Reynolds), fill up my time, and the monster *Ennui* preserves a very respectful distance. By the bye, your friends Batt, sir John Russel, and Lascelles, dined with me one day before they set off; for I sometimes give the prettiest little dinner in the world. But all this compo-
sure draws near its conclusion. About the sixteenth of this month Mr. Eliot carries me away, and after picking up Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, sets me down at Port Eliot; there I shall remain six weeks, or, in other words, to the end of September. My future motions, whether to London, Derbyshire, or a longer stay in Cornwall (pray is not "motion to stay" rather in the Hibernian style?), will depend on the life of Port Eliot, the time of the meeting of parliament, and perhaps the impatience of Mr. *****
lord of Lenborough. One of my pleasures to town I forgot to mention, the unexpected visit of Deyverdun, who accompanies his young lord (very young indeed!) on a two month's tour to England. He took the opportunity of the earl's going down to the duke of *****
to spend a fortnight (nor do I recollect a more pleasant one) in Bentinck Street. They are now gone together into Yorkshire, and I think it doubtful whether I shall see him again before his return to Leipsic. It is a melancholy reflection, that while one is plagued with acquaintance at the corner of every street, real friends should be separated from each other by unsurmountable bars, and obliged to catch at a few transient moments of interview. I desire that you and my lady (whom I most respectfully greet) would take your share of that very new and acute observation, not so large a share indeed as my Swiss friend, since nature and fortune give us more frequent opportunities of being together. You cannot expect news from a desert, and such is London at present. The papers give you the full harvest of public intelligence; and I imagine, that the eloquent nymphs of Twickenham communicate all the trans-
actions of the polite, the amorous, and the marrying world. The great pantomime of Portsmouth was universally admired; and I am angry at my own laziness in neglecting an excellent opportunity of seeing it. Foote has given us

the Bankrupt, a serious and sentimental piece, with very severe strictures on the license of scandal in attacking private characters. Adieu. Forgive and epistolize me. I shall not believe you sincere in the former, unless you make Benthinck Street your inn. I fear I shall be gone; but Mrs. Ford and the parrot will be proud to receive you and my lady after your long peregrination, from which I expect great improvements. Has she got the brogue upon the tip of her tongue?

LETTER LXXXIX.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

Paris, August 13, 1777.

WELL, and who is the culprit now?—Thus far had I written in the pride of my heart, and fully determined to inflict an epistle upon you, even before I received any answer to my former; I was very near a bull. But this forward half-line lays ten days barren and inactive, till its generative powers were excited by the missive which I received yesterday. What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it in America? The greatest force, which any European power ever ventured to transport into that continent, is not strong enough even to attack the enemy; the naval strength of Great Britain is not sufficient to prevent the Americans (they have almost lost the appellation of rebels) from receiving every assistance that they wanted; and in the mean time you are obliged to call out the militia to defend your own coasts against their privateers. You possibly may expect from me some account of the designs and policy of the French court; but I choose to decline that task for two reasons: 1st, Because you may find them laid open in every newspaper; and 2dly, Because I live too much with their courtiers and ministers to know any thing about them. I shall only say, that I am not under any immediate apprehensions of a war with France. It is much more pleasant, as well as profitable, to view in safety the raging of the tempest, occasionally to pick up some pieces of the wreck, and to improve their trade, their agriculture, and their finances, while the two countries are *lento collisa duello*. Far from

taking any step to put a speedy end to this astonishing dispute, I should not be surprised if next summer they were to lend their cordial assistance to England, as to the weaker party. As to my personal engagement with the D. of R., I recollect a few slight skirmishes, but nothing that deserves the name of a general engagement. The extravagance of some disputants, both French and English, who have espoused the cause of America, sometimes inspires me with an extraordinary vigour. Upon the whole, I find it much easier to defend the justice than the policy of our measures; but there are certain cases, where whatever is repugnant to sound policy ceases to be just.

The more I see of Paris, the more I like it. The regular course of the society in which I live is easy, polite, and entertaining; and almost every day is marked by the acquisition of some new acquaintance, who is worth cultivating, or who at least is worth remembering. To the great admiration of the French, I regularly dine and regularly sup, drink a dish of strong coffee after each meal, and find my stomach a citizen of the world. The spectacles (particularly the Italian, and above all the French Comedies), which are open the whole summer, afford me an agreeable relaxation from company; and to shew you that I frequent them from taste, and not from idleness, I have not yet seen the Coliseum, the Vauxhall, the Boulevards, or any of those places of entertainment which constitute Paris to most of our countrymen. Occasional trips to dine or sup in some of the thousand country houses which are scattered round the environs of Paris, serve to vary the scene. In the mean while the summer insensibly glides away, and the fatal month of October approaches, when I must change the house of madame Necker for the House of Commons. I regret that I could not choose the winter, instead of the summer, for this excursion: I should have found many valuable persons, and should have preserved others whom I have lost as I began to know them. The duke de Choiseul, who deserves attention both for himself and for keeping the best house in Paris, passes seven months of the year in Touraine; and though I have been tempted, I consider with horror a journey of sixty leagues into the country. The princess

of Beauveau, who is a most superior woman, had been absent about six weeks, and does not return till the 24th of this month. A large body of recruits will be assembled by the Fontainebleau journey; but, in order to have a thorough knowledge of this splendid country, I ought to stay till the month of January; and if I could be sure, that opposition would be as tranquil as they were last year—I think your life has been as animated, or, at least, as tumultuous; and I envy you lady Payne, &c., much more than either the primate or the chief justice. Let not the generous breast of my lady be torn by the black serpents of envy. She still possesses the first place in the sentiments of her slave: but the adventure of the fan was a mere accident, owing to lord Carmarthen. Adieu. I think you may be satisfied. I say nothing of my terrestrial affairs.

LETTER XC.

From the same to the same.

February 6th, 1779.

You are quiet and peaceable, and do not bark, as usual, at my silence. To reward you, I would send you some news, but we are asleep: no foreign intelligence, except the capture of a frigate; no certain accounts from the West Indies, and a dissolution of parliament, which seems to have taken place since Christmas. In the papers you will see negotiations, changes of departments, &c., and I have *some* reason to believe that those reports are not entirely without foundation. Portsmouth is no longer an object of speculation; the whole stream of all men, and all parties, run one way. Sir Hugh is disgraced, ruined, &c. &c.; and as an old wound has broken out again, they say he must have his leg cut off as soon as he has time. In a night or two we shall be in a blaze of illumination, from the zeal of naval heroes, land patriots, and tallow chandlers; the last are not the least sincere. I want to hear some details of your military and familiar proceedings. By your silence I suppose you admire Davis, and dislike my pamphlet; yet such is the public folly, that we have a second edition in the press: the fashionable style of the clergy is to say they have not read it.

If Maria does not take care, I shall write a much sharper invective against her, for *not* answering my diabolical book. My lady carried it down, with a solemn promise that I should receive an *unassisted* French letter. Yet I embrace the little animal, as well as my lady, and the *spes altera Romæ*. Adieu.

There is a buz about a peace, and Spanish mediation.

LETTER XCI.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, September 30th, 1783.

I ARRIVED safe in harbour last Saturday, the 27th instant, about ten o'clock in the morning; but as the post only goes out twice a week it was not in my power to write before this day. Except one day, between Langres and Besançon, which was laborious enough, I finished my easy and gentle airing without any fatigue, either of mind or body. I found Deyverdun well and happy, but much more happy at the sight of a friend, and the accomplishment of a scheme, which he had so long and impatiently desired. His garden, terrace, and park, have even exceeded the most sanguine of my expectations and remembrances; and you yourself cannot have forgotten the charming prospect of the lake, the mountains, and the declivity of the Pays de Vaud. But as human life is perpetually chequered with good and evil, I have found some disappointments on my arrival. The easy nature of Deyverdun, his indolence, and his impatience, had prompted him to reckon too positively that his house would be vacant at Michaelmas; some unforeseen difficulties have arisen, or have been discovered when it was already too late, and the consummation of our hopes is (I am much afraid) postponed to next spring. At first I was knocked down by the unexpected thunderbolt; but I have gradually been reconciled to my fate, and have granted a free and gracious pardon to my friend. As his own apartment, which afforded me a temporary shelter, is much too narrow for a settled residence, we hired, for the winter, a convenient ready-furnished apartment, in the nearest part of the Rue de Bourg, whose back

door leads in three steps to the terrace and garden, as often as a tolerable day shall tempt us to enjoy their beauties; and this arrangement has even its advantage, of giving us time to deliberate and provide, before we enter on a larger and more regular establishment. But this is not the sum of my misfortunes: hear, and pity! The day after my arrival (Sunday) we had just finished a temperate dinner, and intended a round of visits on foot, *chapeau sous le bras*, when, most unfortunately, Deyverdun proposed to shew me something in the court: we boldly and successfully ascended a flight of stone steps, but in the descent I missed my footing, and strained, or sprained, my ancle in a painful manner. My old latent enemy (I do not mean the devil), who is always on the watch, has made an ungenerous use of his advantage, and I much fear that my arrival at Lausanne will be marked with a fit of the gout, though it is quite unnecessary, that the intelligence or suspicion should find its way to Bath. Yesterday afternoon I lay, or at least sat, in state, to receive visits, and at the same moment my room was filled with four different nations. The loudest of these nations was the single voice of the abbé Raynal, who, like your friend, has chosen this place for the asylum of freedom and history. His conversation, which might be very agreeable, is intolerably loud, peremptory, and insolent; and you would imagine, that he alone was the monarch and legislator of the world. Adieu. I embrace my lady, and the infants. With regard to the important transactions, for which you are constituted plenipotentiary, I expect, with some impatience, but with perfect confidence, the result of your labours. You may remember what I mentioned of my conversation with * * * * * about the place of minister at Bern: I have talked it over with Deyverdun, who does not dislike the idea, provided this place was allowed to be my villa during at least two-thirds of the year; but for my part I am sure, that * * * * * are worth more than ministerial friendship and gratitude; so I am inclined to think, that they are preferable to an office, which would be procured with difficulty, enjoyed with constraint and expense, and lost, perhaps, next April, in the annual revolutions of our domestic government. Again adieu.

LETTER XCII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lady Sheffield.

Lausanne, October 28, 1783.

THE progress of my gout is in general so regular, and there is so much uniformity in the History of its Decline and Fall, that I have hitherto indulged my laziness, without much shame or remorse, without supposing that you would be very anxious for my safety, which has been sufficiently provided for by the triple care of my friend Deyverdun, my humbler friend Caplin, and a very conversable physician (not the famous Tissot), whose ordinary fee is ten batz, about fifteen pence English. After the usual increase and decrease of the member (for it has been confined to the injured part), the gout has retired in good order; and the remains of weakness, which obliged me to move on the rugged pavement of Lausanne with a stick, or rather small crutch, are to be ascribed to the sprain, which might have been a much more serious business. As I have now spent a month at Lausanne, you will inquire, with much curiosity, more kindness, and some mixture of spite and malignity, how far the place has answered my expectations, and whether I do not repent of a resolution, which has appeared so rash and ridiculous to my ambitious friends? To this question, however natural and reasonable, I shall not return an immediate answer, for two reasons: 1. *I have not yet made a fair trial.* The disappointment and delay, with regard to Deyverdun's house, will confine us this winter to lodgings, rather convenient than spacious or pleasant. I am only beginning to recover my strength and liberty, and to look about on persons and things: the greatest part of those persons are in the country, taken up with their vintage; my books are not yet arrived; and, in short, I cannot look upon myself as settled in that comfortable way, which you and I understand and relish. Yet the weather has been heavenly, and till this time, the end of October, we enjoy the brightness of the sun, and somewhat gently complain of its immoderate heat. 2. If I should be too sanguine in explaining my satisfaction in what I have done, you would ascribe that satisfaction to the

novelty of the scene, and the inconstancy of man; and I deem it far more safe and prudent to postpone any positive declaration, till I am placed by experience beyond the danger of repentance and recantation. Yet of one thing I am sure, that I possess in this country, as well as in England, the best cordial of life, a sincere, tender, and sensible friend, adorned with the most valuable and pleasant qualities both of the heart and head. The inferior enjoyments of leisure and society are likewise in my power; and in the short excursions, which I have hitherto made, I have commenced or renewed my acquaintance with a certain number of persons, more especially women (who, at least in France and this country, are undoubtedly superior to our prouder sex), of rational minds and elegant manners. I breakfast alone, and have declared that I receive no visits in a morning, which you will easily suppose is devoted to study. I find it impossible, without inconvenience, to defer my dinner beyond two o'clock. We have got a very good woman cook. Deyverdun, who is somewhat of an epicurean philosopher, understands the management of a table, and we frequently invite a guest or two, to share our luxurious, but not extravagant repasts. The afternoons are (and will be much more so hereafter) devoted to society, and I shall find it necessary to play at cards much oftener than in London: but I do not dislike that way of passing a couple of hours, and I shall not be ruined at shilling whist. As yet I have not supped, but in the course of the winter I must sometimes sacrifice an evening abroad, and in exchange I hope sometimes to steal a day at home, without going into company.

* * * * *

* I have all this time been talking to lord Sheffield; I hope that he has dispatched my affairs, and it would give me pleasure to hear that I am no longer member for Lymington, nor lord of *Lenborough*. Adieu. I feel every day that the distance serves only to make me think with more tenderness of the persons whom I love.

LETTER XCIII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, November 14th, 1783.

LAST Tuesday, November eleventh, after plaguing and vexing yourself all the morning, about some business of your fertile creation, you went to the House of Commons, and passed the afternoon, the evening, and perhaps the night, without sleep or food, stifled in a close room, heated by the respiration of six hundred politicians, inflamed by party passion, and tired of the repetition of dull nonsense, which, in that illustrious assembly, so far outweighs the proportion of reason and eloquence. On the same day, after a studious morning, a friendly dinner, and a cheerful assembly of both sexes, I retired to rest at eleven o'clock, satisfied with the past day, and certain that the next would afford me the return of the same quiet and rational enjoyments. *Which has the better bargain?* Seriously, I am every hour more grateful to my own judgment and resolution, and only regret that I so long delayed the execution of a favourite plan, which I am convinced is the best adapted to my character and inclinations. Your conjecture of the revolutions of my face, when I heard that the house was for this winter inaccessible, is probable, but false. I bore my disappointment with the temper of a sage, and only use it to render the prospect of next year still more pleasing to my imagination. You are likewise mistaken, in imputing my fall to the awkwardness of my limbs. The same accident might have happened to *Slingsby* himself, or to any *hero* of the age, the most distinguished for his *bodily activity*. I have now resumed my entire strength, and walk with caution, yet with speed and safety, through the streets of this mountainous city. After a month of the finest autumn I ever saw, the *bise* made me feel my old acquaintance; the weather is now milder, and this present day is dark and rainy, not much better than what you probably enjoy in England. The town is comparatively empty, but the noblesse are returning every day from their chateaux, and I already perceive, that I shall have more reason to complain of dissipation than of dulness. As I told lady S., I am afraid of being

too rash and hasty in expressing my satisfaction; but I must again repeat, that appearances are extremely favourable. I am sensible, that general praise conveys no distinct ideas, but it is very difficult to enter into particulars where the individuals are unknown, or indifferent to our correspondent. You have forgotten the *old* generation, and in twenty years a new one is grown up. Death has swept many from the world, and chance or choice has brought many to this place. If you inquire after your acquaintance Catherine, you must be told, that she is solitary, ugly, blind, and universally forgotten. Your later flame, and our common goddess, the Eliza, passed a month at the inn. She came to consult Tissot, and was acquainted with Cerjat. And now to business. * * *

* * * * *

With regard to meaner cases, these are two, which you can and will undertake. 1. As I have not renounced my country, I should be glad to hear of your parliamentary squabbles, which may be done with small trouble and expense. After an interesting debate, my lady in due time may cut the speeches from Woodfall; you will write or dictate any curious anecdote; and the whole, inclosed in a letter, may be dispatched to Lausanne. 2. A set of Wedgewood china, which we talked of in London, and which would be most acceptable here. As you have a *sort* of a taste, I leave to your own choice the colour and the pattern; but as I have the inclination and means to live very handsomely *here*, I desire that the size and number of things may be adequate to a plentiful table. If you see lord North, assure him of my gratitude: had he been a more successful friend, I should now be drudging at the Board of Customs, or vexed with business in the amiable society of —. To lord Loughborough present an affectionate sentiment: I am satisfied of his intention to serve me, if I had not been in such a fidget. I am sure you will not fail, while you are in town, to visit and comfort poor aunt Kitty. I wrote to her on my first arrival, and she may be assured that I will not neglect her. To my lady I say nothing; we have now our private correspondence, into which the eye of a husband should not be permitted to intrude. I am really satisfied

with the success of the pamphlet; not only because I have a sneaking kindness for the author, but as it shews me, that plain sense, full information, and warm spirit, are still acceptable in the world. You talk of Lausanne as a place of retirement, yet, from the situation and freedom of the Pays de Vaud, all nations, and all extraordinary characters, are astonished to meet each other. The abbé Raynal, the grand Gibbon, and Mercier, author of the *Tableau de Paris*, have been in the same room. The other day the prince and princess de Ligne; the duke and duchess d'Ursel, &c., came from Brussels on purpose (literally true) to act a comedy at * * * in the country. He was dying, and could not appear; but we had comedy, ball, and supper. The event seems to have revived him; for that great man is fallen from his ancient glory, and his nearest relations refuse to see him. I told you of poor Catherine's deplorable state; but madame de Mesery, at the age of sixty-nine, is still handsome. Adieu.

LETTER XCIV.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, December 20th, 1783.

I HAVE received both your epistles; and as any excuse will serve a man, who is at the same time very busy and very idle, I patiently expected the second before I entertained any thoughts of answering the first. * * *

I therefore conclude, that on every principle of common sense, before this moment your active zeal has already expelled me from the house, to which, without regret, I bid an everlasting farewell. The agreeable hour of five o'clock in the morning, at which you commonly retire, does not tend to revive my attachment; but if you add the soft hours of your morning committee, in the discussion of taxes, customs, frauds, smugglers, &c., I think I should beg to be released, and quietly sent to the galleys as a place of leisure and freedom. Yet I do not depart from my general principles of toleration. Some animals are made to live in the water, others on the earth, many in the air, and some, as it is now believed, even in fire. Your present hurry of parlia-

ment I perfectly understand ; when opposition make the attack,

—*Hora*

Memento cila mors venit, aut victoria læta.

But when the minister brings forward any strong and decisive measure, he at length prevails ; but his progress is retarded at every step, and in every stage of the bill, by a pertinacious, though unsuccessful minority. I am not sorry to hear of the splendour of Fox ; I am proud, in a foreign country, of his fame and abilities, and our little animosities are extinguished by my retreat from the English stage. With regard to the substance of the business, I scarcely know what to think : the vices of the company, both in their persons and constitution, were manifold and manifest : the danger was imminent, and such an empire, with thirty millions of subjects, was not to be lost for trifles. Yet, on the other hand, the faith of charters, the rights of property ! I hesitate and tremble. Such an innovation would at least require, that the remedy should be as certain as the evil ; and the proprietors may perhaps insinuate, that *they* were as competent guardians of their own affairs, as either

* * * * or * * * *

Their acting without a salary seems childish, and their not being removable by the crown is a strange and dangerous precedent. But enough of politics, which I now begin to view through a thin, cold, distant cloud, yet not without a reasonable degree of curiosity and patriotism. From the papers (especially when you add an occasional slice of the Chronicle) I shall be amply informed of facts and debates. From you I expect the causes, rather than the events, the true springs of action, and those interesting anecdotes which seldom ascend the garret of a Fleet Street editor. You say that many friends (alias acquaintance) have expressed curiosity and concern ; I should not wish to be immediately forgotten. That others (you once mentioned Gerard Hamilton) condemn government for suffering the departure of a man, who might have done them some credit and some service, perhaps as much

* * * * himself. To you,

in the confidence of friendship, and without either pride or resentment, I will fairly own that I am somewhat of Gerard's opinion : and if I did not compare

it with the rest of his character, I should be astonished that * * * * suffered me to depart, without even a civil answer to my letter. Were I capable of hating a man, whom it is not easy to hate, I should find myself amply revenged by * * * *. But the happy souls in paradise are susceptible only of love and pity ; and though Lausanne is not a paradise, more especially in winter, I do assure you, in sober prose, that it has hitherto fulfilled, and even surpassed, my warmest expectations. Yet I often cast a look toward Sheffield Place, where you now repose, if you can repose, during the Christmas recess. Embrace my lady, the young baroness, and the gentle Louisa, and insinuate to your silent consort, that separate letters require separate answers. Had I an air balloon, the great topic of modern conversation, I would call upon you till the meeting of parliament. *Vale.*

LETTER XCV.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to Mrs. Porten.

Lausanne, December 27th, 1783.

Dear madam,

THE unfortunate are loud and loquacious in their complaints, but real happiness is content with its own silent enjoyment ; and if that happiness is of a quiet, uniform kind, we suffer days and weeks to elapse without communicating our sensations to a distant friend. By you, therefore, whose temper and understanding have extracted from human life on every occasion the best and most comfortable ingredients, my silence will always be interpreted as an evidence of content, and you would only be alarmed (the danger is not at hand) by the too frequent repetition of my letters. Perhaps I should have continued to slumber, I don't know how long, had I not been awakened by the anxiety which you express in your last letter. * * *

* * * * *

From this base subject I ascend to one which more seriously and strongly engages your thoughts, the consideration of my health and happiness. And you will give me credit when I assure you with sincerity, that I have not repented a single moment of the step which I have taken, and that I only regret the not

having executed the same design two, or five, or even ten years ago. By this time, I might have returned independent and rich to my native country; I should have escaped many disagreeable events that have happened in the mean while, and I should have avoided the parliamentary life, which experience has proved to be neither suitable to my temper, nor conducive to my fortune. In speaking of the happiness which I enjoy, you will agree with me, in giving the preference to a sincere and sensible friend: and though you cannot discern the full extent of his merit, you will easily believe that Deyverdun is the man. Perhaps two persons, so perfectly fitted to live together, were never formed by nature and education. We have both read and seen a great variety of objects; the lights and shades of our different characters are happily blended, and a friendship of thirty years has taught us to enjoy our mutual advantages, and to support our unavoidable imperfections. In love and marriage, some harsh sounds will sometimes interrupt the harmony, and in the course of time, like our neighbours, we must expect some disagreeable moments; but confidence and freedom are the two pillars of our union, and I am much mistaken if the building be not solid and comfortable. One disappointment I have indeed experienced, and patiently supported. The family who were settled in Deyverdun's house started some unexpected difficulties, and will not leave it till the spring; so that you must not yet expect any poetical, or even historical, description of the beauties of my habitation. During the dull months of winter we are satisfied with a very comfortable apartment in the middle of the town, and even derive some advantage from this delay: as it gives us time to arrange some plans of alteration and furniture, which will embellish our future and more elegant dwelling. In this season I rise (not at four in the morning) but a little before eight; at nine, I am called from my study to breakfast, which I always perform alone, in the English style; and, with the aid of Caplin, I perceive no difference between Lausanne and Bentinck Street. Our mornings are usually passed in separate studies; we never approach each other's door without a previous message, or thrice knocking, and my apartment is already sacred and

formidable to strangers. I dress at half past one, and at two (an early hour, to which I am not perfectly reconciled) we sit down to dinner. We have hired a female cook, well skilled in her profession, and accustomed to the taste of every nation; as for instance, we had excellent mince-pies yesterday. After dinner, and the departure of our company, one, two, or three friends, we read together some amusing book, or play at chess, or retire to our rooms, or make visits, or go to the coffee-house. Between six and seven the assemblies begin, and I am oppressed only with their number and variety. Whist, at shillings or half crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure. Between nine and ten we withdraw to our bread and cheese, and friendly converse, which sends us to bed at eleven; but these sober hours are too often interrupted by private or numerous suppers, which I have not the courage to resist, though I practise a laudable abstinence at the best furnished tables. Such is the skeleton of my life; it is impossible to communicate a perfect idea of the vital and substantial parts, the characters of the men and women with whom I have very easily connected myself in looser and closer bonds, according to their inclination and my own. If I do not deceive myself, and if Deyverdun does not flatter me, I am already a general favourite; and as our likings and dislikes are commonly mutual, I am equally satisfied with the freedom and elegance of manners, and (after proper allowances and exceptions) with the worthy and amiable qualities of many individuals. The autumn has been beautiful, and the winter hitherto mild, but in January we must expect some severe frost. Instead of rolling in a coach, I walk the streets, wrapped up in a fur cloak; but this exercise is wholesome, and except an accidental fit of the gout of a few days, I never enjoyed better health. I am no longer in Pavillard's house, where I was almost starved with cold and hunger, and you may be assured I now enjoy every benefit of comfort, plenty, and even decent luxury. You wish me happy; acknowledge that such a life is more conducive to happiness, than five nights in the week passed in the House of Commons, or five mornings spent at the custom-house. Send me, in return, a fair account of your own situa-

tion in mind and body. I am satisfied your own good sense would have reconciled you to inevitable separation; but there never was a more suitable diversion than your visit to Sheffield Place. Among the innumerable proofs of friendship which I have received from that family, there are none which affect me more sensibly than their kind civilities to you, though I am persuaded that they are at least as much on your account as on mine. At length madame de * * * * * is delivered by her tyrant's death; her daughter, a valuable woman of this place, has made some inquiries, and though her own circumstances are narrow, she will not suffer her father's widow to be left totally destitute. I am glad you derived so much melancholy pleasure from the letters, yet had I known it, I should have withheld * * * * *.

LETTER XCVI.

*Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon.
Lord Sheffield.*

Lausanne, August, 1789.

AFTER receiving and dispatching the power of attorney, last Wednesday, I opened, with some palpitation, the unexpected missive which arrived this morning. The perusal of the contents spoiled my breakfast. They are disagreeable in themselves, alarming in their consequences, and peculiarly unpleasant at the present moment, when I hoped to have formed and completed the arrangements of my future life. I do not perfectly understand what are these deeds which are so inflexibly required; the wills and marriage settlements I have sufficiently answered. But your arguments do not convince ****, and I have very little hope from the Lenborough search. What will be the event? If his objections are only the result of legal scrupulosity, surely they might be removed, and every chink might be filled, by a general bond of indemnity, in which I boldly ask you to join, as it will be a substantial important act of friendship, without any possible risk to yourself or your successors. Should he still remain obdurate, I must believe what I already suspect, that **** repents of his purchase, and wishes to elude the conclusion. Our case would then be hopeless,

ibi omnis effusus labor, and the estate would be returned on our hands with the taint of a bad title. The refusal of mortgage does not please me; but surely our offer shews some confidence in the goodness of my title. If he will not take eight thousand pounds at *four per cent.* we must look out elsewhere; new doubts and delays will arise, and I am persuaded that you will not place an implicit confidence in any attorney. I know not as yet your opinion about my Lausanne purchase. If you are against it, the present position of affairs gives you great advantage, &c. &c. The Severys are all well: an uncommon circumstance for the four persons of the family at once. They are now at Mex, a country-house six miles from hence, which I visit tomorrow for two or three days. They often come to town, and we shall contrive to pass a part of the autumn together at Rolle. I want to change the scene; and beautiful as the garden and prospect must appear to every eye, I feel that the state of my own mind casts a gloom over them; every spot, every walk, every bench, recalls the memory of those hours, of those conversations, which will return no more. But I tear myself from the subject. I could not help writing to-day, though I do not find I have said any thing very material. As you must be conscious that you have agitated me, you will not postpone any agreeable, or even *decisive* intelligence. I almost hesitate, whether I shall run over to England, to consult with you on the spot, and to fly from poor Deyverdun's shade, which meets me at every turn. I did not expect to have felt his loss so sharply. But six hundred miles! Why are we so far off?

Once more, What is the difficulty of the title? Will men of sense, in a sensible country, never get rid of the tyranny of lawyers, more oppressive and ridiculous than even the old yoke of the clergy? Is not a term of seventy or eighty years, nearly twenty in my own person, sufficient to prove our legal possession? Will not the records of fines and recoveries attest that I am free from any bar entails and settlements? Consult some sage of the law, whether their present demand be necessary and legal. If your ground be firm, force them to execute the agreement, or forfeit the deposit. But if, as I much fear, they have a right,

and a wish, to elude the consummation, would it not be better to release them at once, than to be hung up for five years, as in the case of Lovegrove, which cost me in the end four or five thousand pounds? You are bold, you are wise; consult, resolve, act. In my penultimate letter I dropped a strange hint, that a migration homeward was not impossible. I know not what to say; my mind is all afloat? yet you will not reproach me with caprice or inconstancy. How many years did you damn my scheme of retiring to Lausanne! I executed that plan; I found as much happiness as is compatible with human nature, and during four years (1783—1787) I never breathed a sigh of repentance. On my return from England, the scene was changed: I found only a faint semblance of Deyverdun, and that semblance was each day fading from my sight. I have passed an anxious year, but my anxiety is now at an end, and the prospect before me is a melancholy solitude. I am still deeply rooted in this country: the possession of this paradise; the friendship of the Severys, a mode of society suited to my taste, and the enormous trouble and *expense* of a migration. Yet in England (when the present clouds are dispelled) I could form a very comfortable establishment in London, or rather at Bath; and I have a very noble country-seat at about ten miles from East Grinstead in Sussex. That spot is dearer to me than the rest of the three kingdoms; and I have sometimes wondered how two men, so opposite in their tempers and pursuits, should have imbibed so long and lively a propensity for each other. Sir Stainier Porten is just dead. He has left his widow with a moderate pension, and two children, my nearest relations: the eldest, Charlotte, is about Louisa's age, and also a most amiable and sensible young creature. I have conceived a romantic idea of educating and adopting her; as we descend into the vale of years our infirmities require some domestic female society; Charlotte would be the comfort of my age, and I could reward her care and tenderness with a decent fortune. A thousand difficulties oppose the execution of the plan, which I have never opened but to you; yet it would be less impracticable in England than in Switzerland. Adieu. I am wounded; pour some oil into my wounds; yet I

am less unhappy since I have thrown my mind upon paper.

Are you not amazed at the French revolution? They have the power, will they have the moderation, to establish a good constitution? Adieu, ever yours.

LETTER XCVII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, Dec. 15th, 1789.

You have often reason to accuse my strange silence and neglect in the most important of *my own* affairs; for I will presume to assert, that in a business of yours of equal consequence, you should not find me cold or careless. But on the present occasion my silence is, perhaps, the highest compliment I ever paid you. You remember the answer of Philip of Macedon; "Philip may sleep, while he knows that Parmenio is awake." I expected, and, to say the truth, I wished that my Parmenio would have decided and acted, without expecting my dilatory answer; and in his decision I should have acquiesced with implicit confidence. But since you will have my opinion, let us consider the present state of my affairs. In the course of my life I have often known, and sometimes felt, the difficulty of getting money; but I now find myself involved in a more singular distress, the difficulty of placing it, and, if it continues much longer, I shall almost wish for my land again.

I perfectly agree with you, that it is bad management to purchase in the funds when they do not yield four pounds *per cent.*

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Some of this money I can place safely, by means of my banker here; and I shall possess, what I have always desired, a command of cash, which I cannot abuse to my prejudice, since I have it in my power to supply with my pen any extraordinary or fanciful indulgence of expense. And so much, much indeed, for pecuniary matters. What would you have me say of the affairs of France? We are too near, and too remote, to form an accurate judgment of that wonderful scene. The abuses of the court and government called aloud for reformation; and it has happened, as it will always happen, that an innocent well-disposed

prince has paid the forfeit of the sins of his predecessors; of the ambition of Lewis the Fourteenth, of the profusion of Lewis the Fifteenth. The French nation had a glorious opportunity; but they have abused, and may lose their advantages. If they had been content with a liberal translation of our system, if they had respected the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the nobles, they might have raised a solid fabric on the only true foundation, the natural aristocracy of a free country. How different is the prospect! Their king, brought a captive to Paris, after his palace had been stained by the blood of his guards; the nobles in exile; the clergy plundered in a way which strikes at the root of all property: the capital an independent republic; the union of the provinces dissolved; the flames of discord kindled by the worst of men (in that light I consider Mirabeau); and the honestest of the assembly a set of wild visionaries (like our Dr. Price), who gravely debate, and dream about the establishment of a pure and perfect democracy of five-and-twenty millions, the virtues of the golden age, and the primitive rights and equality of mankind, which would lead, in fair reasoning, to an equal partition of lands and money. How many years must elapse before France can recover any vigour, or resume her station among the powers of Europe! As yet, there is no symptom of a great man, a Richieu or a Cromwell, arising, either to restore the monarchy, or to lead the commonwealth. The weight of Paris, more deeply engaged in the funds than *all* the rest of the kingdom, will long delay a bankruptcy; and if it should happen, it will be, both in the cause and the effect, a measure of weakness, rather than of strength. You send me to Chambery, to see a prince and an archbishop. Alas! we have exiles enough here, with the marshal de Castries and the duke de Guignes at their head; and this inundation of strangers, which used to be confined to the summer, will now stagnate all the winter. The only ones whom I have seen with pleasure are Mr. Mounier, the late president of the national assembly, and the count de Lally; they have both dined with me. Mounier, who is a serious dry politician, is returned to Dauphiné. Lally is an amiable man of the world, and a poet: he passes the

winter here. You know how much I prefer a quiet select society to a crowd of names and titles, and that I always seek conversation with a view to amusement, rather than information. What happy countries are England and Switzerland, if they know and preserve their happiness!

I have a thousand things to say to my lady, Maria, and Louisa, but I can add only a short postscript about the Madeira. Good Madeira is now become essential to my health and reputation. May your hogshead prove as good as the last; may it not be intercepted by the rebels or the Austrians. What a scene again in that country! Happy England! Happy Switzerland! I again repeat. Adieu.

LETTER XCVIII.

From the same to the same.

Lausanne, April 27, 1793.

My dearest friend, for such you most truly are, nor does there exist a person who obtains, or shall ever obtain, a superior place in my esteem and affection.

After too long a silence I was sitting down to write, when, only yesterday morning (such is now the irregular slowness of the English post), I was suddenly struck, indeed struck to the heart, by the fatal intelligence* from sir Henry Clinton and Mr. De Lally. Alas! what is life, and what are our hopes and projects! When I embraced her at your departure from Lausanne, could I imagine that it was for the last time? When I postponed to another summer my journey to England, could I apprehend that I never, never should see her again? I always hoped that she would spin her feeble thread to a long duration, and that her delicate frame would survive (as is often the case) many constitutions of a stouter appearance. In four days! in your absence, in that of her children! But she is now at rest; and her mild virtues have surely entitled her to the reward of pure and perfect felicity. It is for you that I feel, and I can judge of your sentiments by comparing them with my own. I have lost, it is true, an amiable and affection-

* The death of lady Sheffield.

ate friend, whom I had known and loved above three-and-twenty years, and whom I often stiled by the endearing name of sister. But you are deprived of the companion of your life, the wife of your choice, and the mother of your children! Poor children! the liveliness of Maria, and the softness of Louisa, render them almost equally the objects of my tenderest compassion. I do not wish to aggravate your grief; but, in the sincerity of friendship, I cannot hold a different language. I know the impotence of reason, and I much fear that the strength of your character will serve to make a sharper and more lasting impression.

The only consolation in these melancholy trials to which human life is exposed, the only one at least in which I have any confidence, is the presence of a real friend; and of that, as far as it depends on myself, you shall not be destitute. I regret the few days that must be lost in some necessary preparation; but I trust that to-morrow se'nnight (May the 5th) I shall be able to set forwards on my journey to England; and when this letter reaches you, I shall be considerably advanced on my way. As it is yet prudent to keep at a respectful distance from the banks of the French Rhine, I shall incline a little to the right, and proceed by Schaffouse and Stutgard to Frankfort and Cologne: the Austrian Netherlands are now open and safe, and I am sure of being able at least to pass from Ostend to Dover; whence, without passing through London, I shall pursue the direct road to Sheffield Place. Unless I should meet with some unforeseen accidents and delays, I hope, before the end of the month, to share your solitude, and sympathise with your grief. All the difficulties of the journey, which my indolence had probably magnified, have now disappeared before a stronger passion; and you will not be sorry to hear, that, as far as Frankfort to Cologne, I shall enjoy the advantage of the society, the conversation, the German language, and the active assistance of Severy. His attachment to me is the sole motive which prompts him to undertake this troublesome journey; and as soon as he has seen me over the roughest ground, he will immediately return to Lausanne. The poor young man loved lady S. as a mother, and the whole family is deeply affected by an event, which reminds them

too painfully of their own misfortune. Adieu. I could write volumes, and shall therefore break off abruptly. I shall write on the road, and hope to find a few lines *d' poste restante* at Frankfort and Brussels. Adieu; ever yours.

FROM THE
LETTERS OF ANNA SEWARD.

LETTER XCIX.

Anna Seward to George Hardinge, Esq.

Lichfield, Nov. 11, 1787.

SEDUCER! thou hast made me what I thought to have left the world without having ever been—in love with a lord. His last letter, which you enclosed, concerning his opinion on capital punishments, has fairly done the business; and I had rather be honoured with lord Camelford's amity, than with the marked attention and avowed esteem of most other of the titled sons of our land.

Lord C.'s wit, his ease, and those descriptive powers, which bring scenery to the eye with the precision of the pencil, had previously delighted me; but with the *heart*, sweetly shining out in his last epistle, I am so intemperately charmed, that his idea often fills my eyes with those delicious tears, which, beneath the contemplation of virtues that emulate what we conceive of Deity, instantaneous spring to the lids, without falling from them; tears, which are at once prompted and exhaled by pleasurable sensations. Suffer me to detain, yet a little longer, these scriptures of genius and of mercy.

And now for a little picking at our everlasting bone of contention. Hopeless love is apt to make folk cross; so you must expect me to snarl a little.

I am not to learn that there is a large mass of bad writing in Shakspeare; of stiff, odd, affected phrases, and words, which somewhat disgrace him, and would ten times more disgrace a modern writer, who has not his excuses to plead. All I contend for, and it is a point on which I have the suffrage of most ingenious men, that his best language, being more copious, easy, glowing, bold, and

nervous, than that of perhaps any other writer, is the best model of poetic language to this hour, and will remain so "to the last syllable of recorded time;" that his bold licenses, when we feel that they are happy, ought to be adopted by other writers, and thus become established privileges; and that present and future English poets, if they know their own interest, will, by using his phraseology, prevent its ever becoming obsolete.

Amid the hurry in which I wrote last, my thankless pen made no comment upon the welcome information you had given, that Mr. Wyatt liked me a little. Assure yourself I like him a great deal more than a little. There's fine style for you! Next to benevolent Virtue, thou, Genius, art my earthly divinity. To thy votaries, in every line, I look up with an awe-mixed pleasure which it is delicious to feel.

When he was first introduced to me, the glories of our Pantheon rushing on my recollection, my heart beat like a love-sick girl's, on the sight of her innamorato:—

"A diff'rent cause, says Parson Sly,
The same effect may give."

I am glad you like Hayley's countenance. How have I seen those fine eyes of his sparkle, and melt, and glow, as wit, compassion, or imagination had the ascendance in his mind!

Mrs. Hardinge seems to have as much wit as yourself; the conversational ball must be admirably kept up between you. One of your characteristic expressions about her is as complete a panegyric as ever man made upon woman. "She is of all hours." If it is not in Shakspeare, and I do not recollect it there, it is like, it is worthy of his pen.

About the Herva of my friend Mathias, we are for once in unison; but you are not half so candid as I am. Ever have you found me ready to acknowledge the prosaism of many lines, which you have pointed out in my most favourite poets. I sent you some of my late friend's, and your idol, Davies, which you could not but feel were unclassical, and inelegant in the extreme; yet no such concession have you made to those instances.

I have frequently mentioned Cowper's Task to you; but you are invincibly silent upon that subject. Have I not rea-

son to reproach? How should an enthusiast in the art she loves bear to see her friend thus coldly regardless of such a poet as Cowper, while he exalts Davies above a Beattie, an Hayley; above the author of *Elfrida* and *Caractacus*!—for said not that friend, that no modern poet was so truly a poet as Davies?

He who can think so, would, I do believe, peruse, with delectable stoicism, a bard who should now rise up with all the poetic glories that lived on the lyres of Shakspeare and Milton. "If ye believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither shall ye be persuaded by me, though one arose from the dead;"—and so much at present for prejudice and criticism.

As for the last sentence in your letter, my friend, I meddle not with politics;—yet confess myself delighted with our juvenile minister, of whom, I trust, we may say of his political, as well as natural life, for many years to come—

"Our young Marcellus was not born to die."

Adieu!

LETTER C.

Anna Seward to Captain Seward.

Dec. 7, 1787.

Is it possible that lord Heathfield should not see the impropriety of my presuming to intrude upon the duke of Richmond's attention with an interference, by request, in military promotion, since I can scarcely be said to have the shadow of a personal acquaintance with his grace!

My father's present state, the almost utter loss of all his intellectual faculties, is known. Did he possess them, impertinent surely would be an acknowledgment from him, that he supposed the duke meant any thing more than a polite compliment, by giving the name of obligation to the civility of ordering our servants to make up a bed for him during three nights, and to prepare a bason of gruel for him in the morning, before he went to the field. This was literally all he could be prevailed upon to accept beneath this roof, when, in his years of bloom, he united the occupation of Mars to the form of Adonis. I was then a green girl, "something between

the woman and the child," nor have I ever since beheld the duke of Richmond. Though I so perfectly remember *him*, it is more than probable that he remembers not me; and it would be more than impertinent to presume that I could have interest with him.

As to incurring obligations, I should be very glad thus to incur them from the duke for your advantage;—but observation, and indeed the revolt I have always myself felt from officious recommendation, invariably proved to me that it injures instead of promoting the interests of the recommended. His grace would certainly be disgusted by my seeming to suppose, that any mention I could make of a relation, or friend, could operate in their favour. Disgust has a withering influence upon patronage. What is it I could say, that has a shadow of probability to enhance the duke's good opinion of a *military* man?—that man already recommended to him by lord Heathfield, the greatest general existing, whose praise ought to be the passport to martial honours and emolument. An attempt of this sort from me, would be just as likely to be of use, as if, had I been in Gibraltar during the siege, and when our artillery was pouring on the enemy, I had thrown a bonfire-squib into the mouth of a forty-pounder to assist the force of the explosion.

And, lest it should be apprehended that my poetic reputation might give some degree of consequence to my request, Mr. Hayley, who is the duke's near neighbour, has told me, that his grace had no fondness for works of imagination. The race of Mæcenas is extinct in this period.

When my dear father was in his better days, he lived on terms of intercourse and intimacy with the marquis of Stafford. Lord Sandwich and my father, in their mutual youth, had been on the continent together, with the affection of brothers. On my publishing the *Monody on André*, he desired me to present one to each of these lords, expressing an assured belief, that the work of an old friend's daughter would not be unacceptable.

I, who ever thought that men of rank have seldom any taste for intellectual exertion, which serves not some purpose of their own interest; and feeling an invincible repugnance to paying atten-

tions, which are likely to be repulsed with rude neglect, strongly, warmly, and even with a few proud tears, expostulated against the intrusion. My father never knew that great world, with which, in his youth, he had much intercourse. Frank, unsuspecting, inattentive to those nice shades of manners, those effects, resulting from trivial circumstances, which develop the human heart, he judged of others by his own ingenuous disposition. Benevolent, infinitely good-natured, and incapable of treating his inferiors with neglect, he thought every kindness, every civility he received, sincere—every slight shewn, either to himself or others, accidental.

Thus he would persist in the idea, that these lords would be gratified by such a mark of attention to them; and that I should receive their thanks. I, who had been so much less in their society, knew them better; that such little great men are as capable of impoliteness as they are incapable of taste for the arts;—but my obedience was insisted upon.

One condition, however, I made, that, if they should not have the good manners to write, "I thank you, madam, for your poem," he would never more request me to obtrude my compositions upon titled insolence. They had not the civility to make the least acknowledgment.

My heart (I own it is in some respects a proud one) swelled with indignation;—not at the neglect, for I felt it beneath my attention, and had expected it, but because I had been obliged to give them reason to believe that I desired their notice.

My life against sixpence, the duke of Richmond would receive a letter from me in the same manner. Ah! a soul like lord Heathfield's, attentive to intellectual exertions in the closet of the studious, as in the field of honour, and generous enough to encourage and throw around it the lustre of his notice, is even more rare than his valour and military skill. I wish his lordship to see this letter. It will explain to him the nature of those convictions, and of those feelings, which must be powerful indeed, ere I could hesitate a moment to follow his advice, though but insinuated, on any subject. My devoted respects and good wishes are his, as they are yours, not periodically, but constantly.

LETTER CI.

Anna Seward to Miss Weston.

Lichfield, April 15, 1788.

YOUR letter, dear Sophia, is full of entertaining matter, adorned with the wonted grace and vivacity of your style. For the payment of such debts our little city is not responsible.

I ought, however, to speak to you of an extraordinary being who ranged amongst us during the winter, since he bears your name, amongst us little folk, I mean, for he was by no means calculated to the meridian of our pompous gentry; though, could he once have been received into their circle, they would perhaps have endured his figure and his profession, and half forgive the superiority of his talents, in consideration of his extreme fondness for every game at cards, and of his being an admirable whist player.

The profession of this personage is music, organist of Solihull in Warwickshire; in middle life; his height and proportion mighty slender, and well enough by nature, but fidgeted and noddled into an appearance not over prepossessing; nor are his sharp features and very sharp little eyes a whit behind them in quizzity. Then he is drest—ye gods, how he is drest!—in a salmon-coloured coat, satin waistcoat, and small-clothes of the same warm aurora tint; his violently protruded chitterlin, more luxuriant in its quantity, and more accurately plaited, than B. B.'s itself, is twice open hemmed.

That his capital is not worth a single hair, he laments with a serio-comic countenance, that would make a cat laugh—and, in that ingenuousness with which he confesses all his miserable vanities, as he emphatically calls them, he tells us, that he had frizzed off the scanty crop three thousand years ago.

This loss is, however, supplied by a wig, for the perfection of which he sits an hour and half every day under the hands of the friseur, that it may be plumed out like a pigeon upon steady and sailing flight—and it is always powdered with marechall,—

“Sweet to the sense, and yellow to the sight.”

A hat furiously cocked and pinched, too small in the crown to admit his head,

sticks upon the extremest summit of the full-winged caxon.

His voice has a scrannel tone, his articulation is hurried, his accent distinguished by Staffordshire provinciality; and it is difficult to stand his bow with any discipline of feature. He talks down the hours, but knows nothing of their flight; eccentric in that respect, and Parnassian in his contempt of the precision of eating times as Johnson himself.

Now look on the other side the medal. His wit, intelligence, and poetic genius, are a mine; and his taste and real accuracy in criticism enable him to cut the rich ore they produce brilliant.

He knows of every body, and has read every thing. With a wonderfully retentive memory, and familiar with the principles of all the sciences, his conversation is as instructive as it is amusing; for his ideas are always uncommon and striking, either from absolute originality, or from new and happy combination.

His powers of mimicry, both in singing and speaking, are admirable. Nobody tells a humorous story better; but, in narrating interesting facts, his comments, though always in themselves worth attention, often fatigue by their plenitude, and by the supense in which we are held concerning the principal events.

The heart of this ingenious and oddly compounded being is open, ardent, and melting as even female tenderness; and we find in it a scrupulous veracity, and an engaging dread of being intrusive. He has no vices, and much active virtue. For these good dispositions he is greatly respected by the genteel families round Solihull, and (for his comic powers doubtless) his society is much sought after by them.

Hither, while he staid in Lichfield, did he often come. Indeed, I found myself perpetually seduced, by his powers of speeding time, to give up more of that fast fleeting possession to him than I could conveniently spare.

Our first interview proved, by mistake, embarrassing and ridiculous. Mr. Dewes being upon a visit to me, he and I were soberly weighing, in our respective balances, the quantity of genius that enriched the reign of Anne, and the liberal portions of it that our own times may boast.

It was evening, the grey hour, that "flings half an image on the straining sight." Comparing the dead and the living, by *other* light than that of candles, we had not called for them.

In bolts our servant Edward, who had seen as indistinctly as I was about to see. "Madam, here's young Mr. Weston."—"Indeed!" exclaimed I, and starting up, rushed towards the personage who followed him, crying out, "Dear Joe, I am vastly glad to see you."—"My name is Joseph Weston, madam." The devil it is, thought I; for the voice, and the accompanying wriggle with which he bowed very low, were not our Joe's voice or bow.

"Lord bless me sir," said I, drawing back, "I have a friend of your name, for whom, in this dusky hour, I took you." He then told me, that he had lately passed an evening with Mr. Saville, who had kindly assured him I should pardon an intrusion which had been the wish of years.

From that period, October last, Weston has been much in Lichfield, where genius and merit are, to the generality of its inhabitants, as dust in the balance against inferior station and exterior inelegance. Yet within these walls, and at our theatre, this finical, but glowing disciple of the Muses, passed many animated hours.

He has the theatric mania upon him, in all its ardour. The enclosed very ingenious prologue he taught Roxwell, who has a fine person and harmonious voice, to speak very delightfully.

I by no means think with you on the general abuse of the higher powers of mind, or respecting their proving injurious to the happiness of their possessor. I have generally, though not always, found, that where there is most genius there is most goodness; and the inexhaustible sources of delight that, closed to common understandings, are open to elevated ones, must inevitably tend to give them a superior degree of happiness.

Johnson's Tour to the Hebrides has been long too much my admiration, in point of elegance, for me to think, with you, that the letters from Scotland, in Mrs. Piozzi's publication, however charming, are to be named with it in the strength, or in graces of style.

So miss P—— can now say with Eloisa—

"Rise Alps between us, and whole oceans roll."

May the heroic spirit of this enterprise be as much for her happiness as it is to her honour!—Adieu.

LETTER CII.

Anna Seward to Thomas Swift, Esq.

Lichfield, June 5, 1788.

It was more than compliment when I said I should be glad to see you. There is much interest for my imagination in such an interview. I admire your poetic genius, and I love your candour, as much as I despise and hate the insensibility of the age to poetic excellence. It has no patrons amongst the splendid and the powerful. The race of Mæcenas is extinct. We find senatorial oratory their sole and universal passion. Absorbed in that pursuit, they can spare no hour of attention for the Muses and their votaries. Never was there a period in which the nymphs of the Castalian fountain had a more numerous train; never were they more bounteous with their glowing inspirations. If we have neither a Shakspeare nor a Milton, it is because the fastidiousness of criticism will not permit those wild and daring efforts, which, fearless of bombast and obscurity, often enveloped by them, and always hazarding every thing, enabled our great masters to reach their now unapproachable elevations in the dramatic and epic line. Lyric poetry has risen higher in this than in any age.

Suffer me to observe, that you ought not to be discouraged by the apathy of the public taste. It is fatal to the profits of authorship; but "fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise;" and every poetic writer ought to remember, that the laurel never flourishes till it is planted upon the grave of genius;—that Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were not known to Pope till he was in middle life—so strangely had even they fallen into that temporary oblivion, whither it is perpetually the fate of poetry to fall; but, to whatever deserves that name, the hour of emergence will come:—

"So sinks the day-star in the ocean's bed,
But yet, anon, repairs his drooping head;
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky."

Mere verses, it is true, sink, like lead in the mighty waters, never more to rise; but your Temple has no native alacrity in sinking.

Cary, literally but just fifteen, is a miracle. I never saw him, nor heard of him till after his Ode to General Elliot came out. My acquaintance with him is not of four months date. His school-fellow and friend, Lister, an inhabitant of this place, has poetic talents of nearly twin excellence. There is only a month's difference in their age. You suspect my having assisted Cary. Upon my honour, I never saw any thing of his that has been published before it was sent away to be printed. The strength and solidity of that boy's mind, his taste, his judgment, astonish me, if possible, even more than the vigour and grace of his fancy. He is a warm admirer of your Temple, and has written a sonnet to express his sense of its excellence. I hope, ere this time, he has sent it to you. I charged him to send it to the Gentleman's Magazine.

Except my translations of Horace, and some letters, signed Benvolio, in that publication, together with a few sonnets, epitaphs, ballads, &c. that crept into that and other public papers, I have printed nothing but the Elegy on Cook, which I gave to Dodsley, Monody on André, and the Louisa, printed by Jackson in this town, Monody on Lady Milar, printed by Robinson, and Ode to General Elliot. Some other poems of mine, which obtained the wreath at B. Easton, may be found in the last volume of that collection. I hate ever to think of printers and booksellers—so little integrity have I found amongst them. If I was on terms with Jackson, I would gladly order him to send you the collection you wish, but I have resolved never more to have any thing to say, or give any order, either to him or Robinson.

A set of spirited and witty essays are just come out, entitled Variety; their principal author is one of my friends. Numbers 25 and 26 are mine. Do not stare at my apparent vanity. Those numbers are not among the witty essays of this collection. Wit was never my talent.

Thank you for your ingenious prologue; but the passage on music is not, perhaps, all it should be. It confounds the distinctions between poetry and music. Of the latter the ancients knew nothing more than melody. The principles of harmonic combination, by which all the great independent effects of the science are produced, were utterly unknown to them. We hear much, it is true, of the powers that music possessed over the passions in Greece: but, in reality, those powers were given by the poetry they conveyed, to which music was merely a pleasing vehicle. We all know that the Grecian bards, with Homer at the head of them, sung their own compositions to the harp. It must have been a simple, little varied, and probably spontaneous melody, to which so long a poem as the Iliad could be adapted. Doubtless the varieties chiefly resulted from the alternately softened tones, and heightened energies of the voice, and by the changes of the countenance. When the ancients spoke of music, they meant it generally as another term for poetry. So much yet of this equivocal expression remains, that we talk even of the modern poets striking the lyre. By that expression, you know, we do not mean that they are musicians.

Since the harmonic principles were discovered, music has been a great independent science, capable of a sublime union with fine poetry, and greatest when thus united; but capable also of giving fascinating grace and awful grandeur to the plainest and most unpoetic language, provided it is not so coarse or absurd as to force ludicrous images upon the mind, which must ever counteract all its elevating effects.

It is, therefore, improper, when we speak upon music as a science, which obtained in Handel the *ne plus ultra* of its excellence, when we seek to do honour to him, and its other great, though to him subordinate masters, at once the rivals and the friends of our poets; it is, I say, improper to confound the two arts by beginning with examples so far back as that period, in which it is impossible to separate them.

Handel is as absolute a monarch of the human passions as Shakspeare, and his every way various excellencies bear the same comparison to the pretty, sweet, lazy, unvaried compositions of the Ita-

ian school, breathing no other passions than love and jealousy, as the plays of Shakspeare bear to those of Racine, Otway, Dryden, Rowe, Voltaire, and our modern tragedies on the French model. Poetry itself, though so much the elder science, for music has been a science only since the harmonic combinations were discovered, possesses not a more inherent empire over the passions than music, of which Handel is the mighty master; than whom

"Nothing went before so great,
And nothing greater can succeed."

When I speak of that empire, it must be remembered, that a certain mal-conformation of the auricular membrane as inevitably frustrates this effect, upon even the most susceptible heart and clearest intellect, as mediocrity of talents, and dulness of perception, frustrate the effects of poetry. Where the ear does not readily distinguish and recognise melodies, no sensibility of heart, no strength of imagination, will disclose the magic of the harmonic world. Milton knew music scientifically, and felt all its powers. To Sam Johnson, the sweetest airs and most superb harmonies were but unmeaning noise. I often regret that Milton and Handel were not contemporaries; that the former knew not the delight of hearing his own poetry heightened as Handel has heightened it. To produce the united effects resulting from the combination of perfect poetry with perfect music, it was necessary that Milton's strains should be set by Handel, and sung by Saville. Of all our public singers, while many are masterly, many elegant, many astonishing, *he* only is sublime: a superiority given by his enthusiastic perception of poetic, as well as of harmonic beauty. I should observe, that the rev. Mr. Benjamin Mence, once of St. Paul's and the King's Chapel, was equally great in his expression of solemn music; but from the harmonic world that sun has long withdrawn its beams. From Mr. Mence Mr. Saville first caught his encries, or rather, by his example, obtained courage to express them. Mr. Harrison has great correctness and delicacy, and some pathos; but he has no energy, and, without energy, Handel can have no justice from his performer.

Colonel Barry lately appeared amongst

us, but instantly fled away. I was delighted to perceive that he had exchanged the languor of indisposition for the sprightliness of health. Adieu!

LETTER CIII.

Anna Seward to Thomas Christie, Esq.

July 1, 1790.

YES, my kind friend, Heaven has at length deprived me of that dear parent to whom I was ever most tenderly attached, and whose infirmities, exciting my hourly pity, increased the pangs of final separation. It was in vain that my reason reproached the selfishness of my sorrow.

I cannot receive, as my due, the praise you so lavish upon my filial attentions. Too passionate was my affection to have had any merit in devoting myself to its duties. All was irresistible impulse. I made no sacrifices, for pleasure lost its nature and its name, when I was absent from him. I studied his ease and comfort, because I delighted to see him cheerful; and, when every energy of spirit was sunk in languor, to see him tranquil. It was my assiduous endeavour to guard him from every pain and every danger, because his sufferings gave me misery, and the thoughts of losing him anguish.

And thus did strong affection leave nothing to be performed by the sense of duty. I hope it would have produced the same attentions on my part; but I am not entitled to say that it would, or to accept of commendation for tenderness so involuntary.

It gives me pleasure that your prospects are so bright. A liberal and extended commerce may be as favourable to the expansion of superior abilities as any other profession; and it is certainly a much more cheerful employment than that of medicine. The humane physician must have his quiet perpetually invaded by the sorrows of those who look anxiously up to him for relief, which no human art can, perhaps, administer.

I have uniformly beheld, with reverence and delight, the efforts of France to throw off the iron yoke of her slavery; not the less oppressive for having been bound with ribbands and lilies. Ill be-

tide the degenerate English heart, that does not wish her prosperity.

You ask me after Mrs. Cowley. I have not the pleasure of her acquaintance, but am familiar with her ingenious writings. This age has produced few better comedies than hers.

You are very good to wish to see me in London: but I have no near view of going thither. You will be sorry to hear that I have lost my health, and am oppressed with symptoms of an hereditary and dangerous disease.

Lichfield has been my home since I was seven years old—this house since I was thirteen; for I am still in the palace, and do not think of moving at present. It is certainly much too large for my wants, and for my income; yet is my attachment so strong to the scene, that I am tempted to try, if I recover, what strict economy, in other respects, will do towards enabling me to remain in a mansion, endeared to me as the tablet on which the pleasures of my youth are impressed, and the image of those that are everlastingly absent. Adieu. Yours.

LETTER CIV.

Anna Seward to Lady Gresley.

Langford Cottage, July 30, 1791.

DEAR and revered lady Gresley expressed a wish of hearing from me. I pay glad obedience to a request so flattering. Probably Mr. White will have told your ladyship how quiet we found the lately turbulent Birmingham, though the country round bore mournful traces of desolating fury. I led him over the lawn to Mosely, where my dear friend, lady Carhampton, had set up her rest, after a life of filial persecutions. We viewed, with aching heart, the scorched and ruined remains of that spacious and elegant mansion, so late the abode of hospitality and cheerfulness, friendship, piety, charity, and peace. Alas! the flames had resounded in those pleasant apartments, and reduced them to a cluster of falling walls. With a face of woe her gardener approached the chaise, and, in half-choked utterance, narrated the afflicting particulars: his lady driven from her house by a determined mob,

who expressed a desire of not injuring her or hers, and even helping to load the waggons she had procured to convey away her goods from a mansion they devoted to destruction because her landlord was a presbyterian. Dreadful bigotry! by which we see kindled afresh those flames of intolerant hatred for difference in religious opinions, which have been so full of mischief through former ages. Lady Carhampton took refuge in a cottage at the gate of the lawn, till sir Robert Lawley's coach arrived to convey her from the dire spectacle of persecuting flames, bursting through every window of her beloved habitation. "The thick drop serene," which had long quenched her sight, perhaps, in that moment, she thought a friendly curtain drawn between her and an object so cruel; but Mrs. Nutterville, the companion of all her exiles, and to whom Mosely was not less dear as a home, beheld that direful resplendence.

Mr. White has perhaps informed you, that the mob threatened, with a similar fate, the splendid residence of lord Beauchamp, because he voted for the repeal of the test act. Had not the military arrived in time, it had probably fallen.

Mr. Fitzthomas's rural parsonage, at the foot of the hill on which stands the princely palace of Ragley, is prettily embosomed in circling glades and shrubberies, whose confines are laved by the silent Arrow, of picturesque course, and with banks very beautifully sylvan. Mr. F.'s passion for umbrageous retirement, has made him indulge the growth of his plantations beyond the bounds of comfort; so that, penetrating the recesses of his bowers, we are perpetually exposed to the fate of Absalom. But this is only in the interior scene. A pretty little lawn, half-mooned by the house and shrubberies, admits the near hill, so magnificently villaed.

Nothing was ever richer in woodland scenery than the surrounding country, or more friendly than our welcome to the rural parsonage. I delivered your ladyship's obliging compliments to its owner, who respectfully returns them. His taste and abilities are too decided not to give inevitable value to the consciousness of being cordially remembered by lady G.

We passed Thursday morning in examining the varied splendours of the

prouder domain; but in such precincts, my admiration, however high-strung, has nothing interesting about it.

Mr. W. setting out earlier on Friday morn, arrived at Tewksbury an hour before me. Perceiving him lean out of the inn window, watching my approach, I cried out to him from the chaise, in the words of Prince Henry's ghost,

"False, fleeting, perjur'd Clarence,
That slew me in the field at Tewksbury!"

Probably to the no small amusement of a few street passengers.

These enthusiasms have been a source of unmixed delight to me: they have been always felt on approaching scenes dignified by any great event in the years long vanished, or that have been the abode of genius, or the subject of its songs. Many a vexation have they banished, many a gloom have they illuminated.

H. White has all this local glow of spirit, and it rendered him a thrice pleasant companion on my journey. Considering how we bustled about in this same town, peeping at the monuments, and all other vestiges of that battle, in which the red roses were blighted, torn up, and deluged in blood—considering, that we walked through the cathedral at Gloucester during choir-service in the afternoon, exulting in the superiority of our own, both as to architectural beauty and choral powers—we did great things by my reaching Bristol that night, and Mr. Whalley's early the next morning.

At ten o'clock Mr. Whalley arrived in his chaise, to conduct me to his Eden, among the Mendip mountains. Singularly, and beyond my high-raised expectations, beautiful I did indeed find it; situated, built, furnished, and adorned in the very spirit of poetic enthusiasm and polished simplicity. It is about twelve years since Mr. Whalley began to cover, with a profusion of trees and shrubs, one of these vast hills, then barren like its brethren. The plantations seem already to have attained their full size, strength, and exuberance of foliage.

By the addition of another horse, to help the chaise-horses, we ascended the sylvan steep. At about two-thirds of its height, on a narrow terrace, stands the

dear white cottage, whose polished graces seem smilingly to deride its name, though breathing nothing heterogeneous to cottage simplicity. The first floor consists of a small hall, with a butler's pantry to the right, and good kitchen to the left; housekeeper's room beyond that; scullery behind the kitchen; the offices at a little distance, detached from the house, many steps below this bank, and screened from sight by trees. The second floor contains, in front, to the north-west, three lightsome, lovely, though not large, apartments, whose spacious sashes are of the Gothic form. These are the dining room, drawing room, and elegant boudoir beyond, all opening through each other. My apartment, from which I now write, is behind the boudoir; its window, at the end of the house, looking to the east, and upon a steep lawn, sprinkled over with larches, poplars, and woodbines, excluded by a circular plantation from all prospect of that magnificent vale, upon which the front rooms look down, in instant and almost perpendicular descent. A gravel walk winds up this secluded lawn to the mountain top. Mr. and Mrs. Whalley, and their other guests, sleep in the attics. The wide-extended vale beneath us has every possible scenic beauty, excepting only the meanders of a river. Scarce two hundred yards from the villa, on the left hand, a bare brown mountain intersects this its woody neighbour, and towers equal heights. The protection it extends from the north-west winds has been every thing to Mr. Whalley, as to the growth and health of his plantations. Sloping its giant's foot to the valley, it finely contrasts, with barren sterility, the rich cultivation of the scenery below, and the lavish umbrage that curtains these steeps.

With the sort of sensation that a beautiful country girl, in the first glow of youth and health, surveys an antiquated dowager of rank and riches, seems this little villa to look down on the large stone mansion of Langford Court, the property of Mr. and Mrs. Whalley, and their former residence. It stands in the valley, about half a mile from us, encircled by its fine lawn of two hundred acres, planted and adorned with great taste. Yet more immediately below us nestles, in a wood, the village of Lang-

ford. The smoke of its farms and cottages, curling amongst the trees at early morn, imparts the glow of vitality and cheerfulness to our romantic retirement. I climb, by seven o'clock in a morning, the highest terrace, and "drink the spirit of the mountain gale," which seems to invigorate my whole frame, and give my lungs the freest respiration. Never before did I breathe, for any continuance, an atmosphere so sublimated. The extensive vale finely breaks into inequalities by knolls and dingles. The beautiful fields wearing, from the late rains, the brightest verdure, have waved outlines of plenteous hedge-moss, and appear, by their depth from the eye, shining and smooth as the lawns of our nobility. They are interspersed with thick and dark, though not large, woods. The whole wide expanse is dotted over by white rough-cast cottages, and here and there a village-spire and quiral chateau.

Fifteen miles in width, and about seven distant from this elevation, the Bristol channel lies, a sheet of silver, stretched longitudinally over the vale. Beyond, we plainly discern the Welch coast, whose mountains bound the horizon.

Mr. Whalley's walks and bowers are finely diversified ;

"Shade above shade, a woody theatre."

The several terraces ascending over each other are connected by steep winding paths for the active, and by grassy steps for the feeble. These terraces are so variously planted and disposed as to avoid all that sameness to which, from their situation, they were liable; now secluded and gloomy; now admitting the rich world below to burst upon the eye. Hermitages and caves, cut in the rocky steeps, contain rustic seats, dedicated to favourite friends, by poetic inscriptions—one to Mrs. Siddons; another to miss Hannah More; another to the accomplished Mrs. Jackson of Bath; one to Mr. Whalley's venerable mother; another to Mr. Inman, the excellent clergyman of this parish; one to Sophia Weston; and one to myself. These grottos relieve us perpetually by their seats amidst ascents so nearly perpendicular.

On the summit of this pendant garden we find a concave lawn, with a large

root-house in the centre of that semi-circular bank, whose thick curtains of firs, larches, poplars, &c. form a darkly verdant fringe, that, rising above the root-house, crowns the mountain-top. This rustic pavilion, supported by pillars made of the boles of old trees, and twined round by woodbines and sweet-peas, is open in front, and commands the whole splendour of the vale below. It contains a large table, on which we lay our work, our writing, or our book, which we carry thither in a morning, whenever the weather will permit. Hitherto the skies have not shone upon us with much summer warmth and brightness.

I had the pleasure to find dear Mrs. Whalley tolerably well, though feeling, at frequent intervals, severe memorials of her dreadful accident. She, Mr. W., and myself, talk of your ladyship, and miss Gresleys frequently, and always with the most lively interest.

Mr. Whalley's mother is here, a miracle at eighty-five, of clear intellects, upright activity, and graceful manners: also miss Davy, a fine young woman, related to Mrs. Whalley; but charming Sophia is not here; the scanty number of these pretty bed-chambers forbids the accommodation of more than two or three friends at the utmost. I have some hopes of seeing her at Bath on Wednesday, whither we have been invited by Mrs. Jackson, in a letter of never-excelled spirit, elegance, and kindness. She daily expects miss Weston's arrival.

My curiosity is on fire to view the drawing-room of Europe, as your ladyship calls it, and to admire, with my actual sight, those graces which you have so often placed before my mind's eye by very animated description.

Late miss Caroline Ansley, married to a Mr. Bosanquet, inhabits the Hall House, Langford Court, and makes Mrs. Whalley a social and pleasant neighbour. Her manners are obliging and ingenious. She inquired much after lady and miss Gresleys, whom she said she had the pleasure of knowing very well; and yesterday the celebrated miss Hannah More favoured me with a visit. I like her infinitely. Her conversation has all the strength and brilliance which her charming writings teach us to expect. Though it was our first interview, and no previous connection, cor-

respondence, or even message, had passed between us, she met me with an extended hand, and all the kindness of old acquaintance.

I have wearied my fingers by the length of this letter, and fear a similar fate for your ladyship's attention. Adieu! dearest madam! Have the goodness to present my affectionate compliments in your domestic circle, and to believe me, with the highest esteem and attachment, your faithful, obliged, and obedient servant.

LETTER CV.

Anna Seward to Mrs. Stokes.

Lichfield¹, July 31, 1796.

I HAVE not seen Wakefield's observations on Pope. They may, as you tell me they are, be very ingenious; but as to plagiarism, Pope would lose little in my esteem from whatever of *that* may be proved against him; since it is allowed, that he always rises above his clumsy models, in their tinsel drapery.

Poetry, being the natural product of a highly-gifted mind, however uncultivated, must exist, in a rude form at least, from the instant that the social compact gives to a man a superplus of time from that which is employed in providing for his natural wants, together with liberation from that anxiety about obtaining such provision, which is generally incompatible with those abstracted ideas from which poetry results. As this leisure, and freedom to thought, arises with the progress of subordination and inequality of rank, men become poets, and this long before their language attains its copiousness and elegance.

The writers of such periods, therefore, present poetic ideas in coarse and shapeless ingenuity. In the unskilled attempt to refine them, they become, in the next stage of the progress, an odd mixture of quaintness and simplicity; but it is reserved for genius, learning, and judgment in combination, supported by the ample resources of a various, mature, and complete language, to elevate, polish, and give the last perfection to the rudiments of poetry, first so coarse and abortive, afterwards so quaint,

and so shredded out into wearisome redundancy.

That work of ever-new poetic information and instruction, T. Warton's Critical Notes to Milton's Lesser Poems, will shew you how very largely Milton took, not only from the classics, but from his verse-predecessors in our own language; from Burton's writings, interlarded with verse; from Drayton; from Spenser; from Shakspeare; from the two Fletchers, and from Drummond. The entire plan, and almost all the outlines of the sweet pictures in *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, are in Burton's *Anatomie of Melancholy*, or a Dialogue between Pleasure and Pain, in verse, with a passage of his in prose; and these were taken and combined in Milton's imagination, with the fine hints in a song in Beaumont and Fletcher's play, *The Nice Valour*, or *Passionate Madman*.

In *Comus*, Milton was much indebted to Fletcher's beautiful pastoral play, *The Faithful Shepherdess*; but Milton and Pope, though with excellence different both in nature and degree, were arch-chymists, and turned the lead and tinsel of others to the purest and finest gold.

Dr. Stokes is mistaken in supposing Milton my first poetic favourite—great as I deem him, the superior of Virgil, and the equal of Homer, my heart and imagination acknowledge yet greater the matchless bard of Avon.

I thank you for the discriminating observations in your letter of April the 24th, upon my late publication. Milton says, that from Adam's lip, not words alone pleased Eve; so may I say, that from your pen praise alone would not satisfy my avidity of pleasing you. The *why* and *wherefore* you are pleased, which is always so ingenious when you write of verse, form the zest, which makes encomium nectar. Mr. Hayley's letter to me on the subject is very gratifying: it joins, to a generous ardency of praise, the elegance, spirit, and affection of his former epistles.

Ah! yes, it is very certain, that not only some, but all our finest poets, frequently invert the position of the verb, and prove that the British Critic, who says it is not the habit of good writers, is a stranger to

their compositions. When Thomson says,

"Vanish the woods, the dim seen river seems
Sullen and slow to roll his misty train,"

it is picture; which it would not have been, if he had coldly written,

"The woods are vanish'd;"

since, in the former, by the precedence of the verb to the noun, we see the fog in the very act of shrouding the woods; but to these constituent excellencies of poetry the eye of a reviewer is the mole's dim curtain. Again, in the same poem, Autumn, this inversion is beautifully used, while its author is paying, in a simile, the finest compliment imaginable to the talents and excursive spirit of his countrymen:—

"As from their own clear north, in radiant
streams,
Bright over Europe bursts the Boreal morn."

And what spirit does Pope often give his lines, by using this inversion in the imperative mood:—

"Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise!"

Then, as to the imputed affectation of the word *Lyceum*, Thomson calls the woods "Nature's vast Lyceum." For his purpose it was necessary to elevate the term by its epithet, for mine to lower it by that which I applied—*minute* Lyceum; and in neither place is its application affected. I am allowed to be patient of criticism, and trust no one is readier to feel its force, and, when just, to acknowledge and to profit by it; but to a censor, who does not know the meaning of the word *thrill*, I may, without vanity, exclaim,

"Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests!"

Have you seen Mrs. Inchbald's late work, *Nature and Art*. She is a favourite novelist with me. Her late work has improbable situations, and is inferior to her *Simple Story*, which ought to have been the title of this composition, to which it is better suited than to the history of *Dorriforth*: yet we find in *Art and Nature* the characteristic force of her pen, which, with an air of undesigning simplicity, places in a strong point of view the worthlessness of such characters as pass with the world for respectable. She seems to remove, as by

accident, their specious veil, and without commenting upon its removal: and certain strokes of blended pathos and horror, indelibly impress the recollection.

But, with yet greater powers than Mrs. Inchbald's, does the author of *Caleb Williams* grapple our attention. I conceive that he said to himself, "I will write a book, that shall have no prototype, yet the taste of the age for the marvellous shall be humoured. Female pens have given us ruined castles, tolling bells, lights that palely gleaming make darkness visible, whispering voices from viewless forms and beckoning shadows: that ground is preoccupied. Let me try if I cannot harrow readers, who have mind, with dread and breathless expectation, without exciting supernatural ideas, and even without the assistance of enamoured interests." If such was his design, the success is complete. Yet has his work many defects; and we perceive his pernicious principles to be those of an absurd and visionary anarchist, who would open all the prison doors, and let thieves and murderers walk at large, in the hope of philosophizing them into virtue.

I learn with regret, that Mr. Mason is going to print a new work of his by a private press, for his friends only. This resolve, doubtless, resulted from disgust to the idea of seeing his compositions subject to the ignorance and effrontery of Review-impertinence, which assumes the right of supposing, that its fabricators understand verse-making better than the first poets of our age—even than he,

"Whom on old Humber's bank the Muses bore,
And nurs'd his youth along the marshy shore."

LETTER CVI.

Anna Seward to Thomas Park, Esq.

Lichfield, Sept. 25, 1800.

I HAVE an immense deal to say to you, and therefore will not waste my time in apologies for the length of my involuntary silence.

Mrs. Park's complaints are unquestionably nervous. Proteus-like, they assume, in turn, the form of various diseases; yet, with all their teasing versa-

tility, and harassing obstinacy, they are not esteemed dangerous.

To have seen you both beneath my roof this tropical summer, and in tolerable health and spirits, would have given me lively pleasure. From the different aspect of my apartments, and the luxuriant umbrage of my lawns and terrace, the over-fervid sun could not have smote us with his beams. I shall be glad to learn, that no accumulation of malady resulted to either of you from the long duration of the skiey ardours.

It is nine years since I passed the three summer months at home. Imperious malady has always expelled me my little Eden, and driven me to the coast in the month of July. I felt very cross and Eweish to leave my scene in the season of light and bloom; and thus compelled, as I was, to seek the Buxton fountain early in the spring, I ventured to omit my coast-expedition this year.

The decided pre-eminence you challenge for Cowper, over all his contemporary bards, stimulates me considerably. Highly as I deem of his genius, I by no means think it unequalled in his day. The superior popularity of the *Task*, over any verse-composition of its period, must be acknowledged; but it is accountable from other causes than poetic pre-eminence, *viz.* its possessing sufficient merit to render it very dear to far the greater part of the discerning few, while it is intelligible and interesting to the undiscerning many. That is not so with some of our noblest poetry, which must be confessed very superior to the *Task*—as *Paradise Lost*, *Comus*, *Lycidas*, and Gray's two matchless odes, and his *Descent of Odin*. Yet not any of those compositions, had they been coeval with the *Task*, would have had the least chance with it, as to attaining speedy popularity. Therefore is it, that speedy popularity, however genuine and independent of review, magazine, and newspaper puffing, is no test of pre-eminence; though, when thus genuine, it remains a proof of considerable merit. The superior works I have mentioned are all of much too coy grace, and abstracted sublimity, to be really felt and sincerely admired by the common reader, who may yet be truly susceptible of the beauties of such a poem as the *Task*. Those readers will, however, be clamorous in applauding works, though above the reach of their

conceptions, which have, by the slowly accumulating suffrages of the enlightened few, obtained high and established reputation.

Then Cowper's *Task*, with no inconsiderable portion of true genius and estimable sentiments, is not only level with their capacities, but gratifies the two most general and nurtured feelings of the human mind; its enthusiasm concerning the Deity, and its malice to its fellow-creatures. The sombre piety of that poem gratifies the first, and its severe moral satire, and, on some occasions, most ungenerous and unjust satire, pampers the second; while the winter's walk, the winter evening, the post-boy, the newspaper, the tea-table—all sweetly touched and described, will delight thousands, who would feel no thrill of impressive feeling in the augustly horrible Pandemonium of Milton, who would be ennuied in his Eden, and puzzled and bewildered in the wild-wood of his enchanter, and by the wizard streams of his Deva.

Let it be remembered, that Cowper's compositions in *rhyme*, whatever strength of thought may be found in them, have no poetic witchery, either of imagery, landscape, or numbers; that Crowe's *Lewesdon Hill*, though its subject is less amusingly desultory than that of the *Task*, may yet, as a work of genius, challenge the finest parts of Cowper's poem.

Let it be remembered how variously and how beautifully Hayley has written; though I confess his genius seems rapidly to have declined from its meridian, since that noble poem, the *Essay on Epic Poetry*, appeared. Of this decline I am afraid you will think, and that it will be generally thought, his late work, *Epistles on Sculpture*, is another proof; though it has many beauties, and though much learned information on the subject is contained in the notes. He was so good to send it me. You will there see, or have already seen, how passionately he deplores his lost *protégé*; and that he there gives him his own name, confirming the public surmise that he was his son; but, if it really was so, he either chose to deceive me on the subject, or I strangely misunderstood him, when I was his guest at Eartham, in the summer 1782, when this youth was an infant, not two years old, and whose real father I understood to be the gallant young

Howel, a former adoption of Mr. Hayley's, who was lost on his return from the West Indies.

But to resume our subject. Recollect the flood of picturesque imagination, which, in richly harmonious verse, Darwin has poured over the discoveries and systems of philosophic science; how original, how true to nature, and how vivid his pictures of the animal and vegetable world! How appropriate, how varied, how exquisite his landscapes! What entertaining and poetic use he has made of the most remarkable occurrences of the late century! I deeply feel, that of the first poetic excellence, invention, there is an immensely transcending portion in Darwin's Botanic Garden to what can be found in the Task.

Cowper is the poetic son of Dr. Young. More equal, more consistent, more judicious, far less uniformly sombre than his parent, but also much less frequently sublime. Darwin has no parent amongst the English poets; he sprung, in his declining years, with all the strength and fancy of juvenile life, from the temples of an immortal Muse, like Pallas from the head of Jove.

Nor should it be forgotten, that Coleridge's Ode to the Departing Year is sublimer throughout than any part of Cowper's Task; that the stripling, Southey, has written an epic poem, full of strength as to idea, and grandeur as to imagery; that both those writers, in their rhyme-productions, far outshine Cowper's prosaic couplets.

When these claims are made, without mentioning the various and charming Mason, since his poetic sun was setting when Cowper's rose—when they are poised in the scale, surely you will resign your colossal claim for the muse of Cowper, destined as she is to immortal remembrance. That destiny I asserted for her to Dr. Darwin and sir Brooke Boothby, ten years ago, when I heard them decide, that the Task was too prosaic to survive its century, and that they could not read it through.

And now, what shall I say to you on the subject of miss Bannerman's volume? Long as my letter already is, I feel that I have much to add on the subject, to justify my utter dissent from you on that theme. Dr. A.'s lavish praise of powers, which appear to me of such strutting feebleness, surprises me much less than

yours, since he pronounced the prosaic and long defunct Leonidas a fine epic poem.

In the first place, you style miss B. pre-eminent as a Scottish poetess. Ah! have you forgotten Helen Williams and her Peru, published when she was under twenty? I confess an epic poem was too arduous an attempt for years so blossoming, an unclassic education, and inexperience in criticism. Peru, consequently, wants strength, and a sufficient portion of characteristic variety, and its metaphors and epithets are sometimes incongruous; but the numbers are richly harmonious, the landscapes vivid, and the fancy wildly and luxuriantly elegant.

Have you forgotten, also, that miss Baillie, just emerged as the acknowledged author of the Plays on the Passions, is a Scottish woman; and, in my estimation, if indeed they are hers, as nobody now seems to doubt, a very great poet. Whatever may be the faults of her two tragedies, poetic strength and beauty are to be found in them, which place her in the first rank of those, who, in this period, have struck the Delphic lyre. No plays, except Jephson's, approach Shakspeare's so nearly.

Surely that obscurity, which Burke pronounces a source of the sublime, is totally different in its nature to the strained and abortive conceptions of miss Bannerman's pen! The obscurity he means is where sentiment is rather hinted than expressed; and, to an intelligent mind, conveys a different meaning to that which the words simply bear.

Certainly an author is not obliged to find his reader brains; but that obscurity, which puzzles a reader, who has poetic sensibility and taste, to guess what the author means, is a great inexpiable fault; and, if it occurs frequently, is as sure a proof of weakness in the powers of composition, as the former species is of strength.

There are other things, as you well know, which may render poetry obscure to the prosers, without fault in the composer; as inversions, using epithets as verbs active, or as noun substantives, together with the bold and graceful omission of the conjunctives.

But the palpable obscure, in which miss B.'s ideas are perpetually struggling, is not the result of the poetic licenses, any

more than of that mode of expression, which purposely leaves something to be supplied by the imagination of the reader. Unquestionably she has a good ear for the construction of numbers; her lines flow tunefully. Flowing numbers are, however, but the drapery of poetry, valuable when they clothe clear and vigorous thoughts and striking imagery; but worth little when they enrobe such blown and empty conceptions as I find on the pages of miss B.

You speak of the wildness of her fancy, — it seems to me elaborate, yet incomprehensible; inflated, yet trite; and, if I know what invention is, that prime essential in poetry, she has absolutely none. Therefore is it, that no time, no instruction, no experience, will make her a poet, though her command of numbers tolerably qualifies her for a translator; not of that class, however, which rise upon their originals.

I will take an early opportunity of shewing you the ground of these my convictions. Meantime, &c.

LETTER CVII.

Anna Seward to Walter Scott, Esq.

Lichfield, April 29, 1802.

ACCEPT my warmest thanks for the so far overpaying bounty of your literary present*. In speaking of its contents I shall demonstrate, that my sincerity may be trusted, whatever cause I may give you to distrust my judgment. In saying that you dare not hope your works will entertain me, you evince the existence of a deep preconceived distrust of the latter faculty in my mind. That distrust is not, I flatter myself, entirely founded, at least if I may so gather from the delight with which I peruse all that is yours, whether prose or verse, in these volumes.

Your dissertations place us in Scotland, in the midst of the feudal period. They throw the strongest light on a part of history indistinctly sketched, and partially mentioned by the English historians, and which, till now, has not been sufficiently elucidated, and rescued by those of your country from the imputed

guilt of unprovoked depredation on the part of the Scots.

The old border ballads of your first volume are so far interesting as they corroborate your historic essays; so far valuable as that they form the basis of them. Poetically considered, little surely is their worth; and I must think it more to the credit of Mrs. Brown's memory than of her taste, that she could take pains to commit to remembrance, and to retain there, such a quantity of uncouth rhymes, almost totally destitute of all which gives metre a right to the name of poetry.

Poetry is like personal beauty; the homeliest and roughest language cannot conceal the first, any more than coarse and mean apparel the second. But grovelling colloquial phrase, in numbers inharmonious; verse that gives no picture to the reader's eye, no light to his understanding, no magnet to his affections, is, as composition, no more deserving his praise, than coarse forms and features in a beggar's raiment are worth his attention. Yet are there critics who seem to mistake the squalid dress of language for poetic excellence, provided the verse and its mean garb be ancient.

Of that number seems Mr. Pinkerton, in some of his notes to those old Scottish ballads which he published in 1781; and the late Mr. Healdy more than so seems in that collection of ancient English ballads, which he soon after gave to the press. We find there an idiot preference of the rude, and, in itself, valueless, foundation, on which Prior raised one of the loveliest poetic edifices in our language, the *Henry and Emma*. With equal insolence and stupidity, Mr. Healdy terms it "*Matt's versification Piece*," extolling the imputed superiority of the worthless model. It is preferring a barber's block to the head of Antinous.

Mr. Pinkerton, in his note to the eldest *Flowers of the Forest*, calls it, very justly, an exquisite poetic dirge; but, unfortunately for his decisions in praise of ancient above modern Scottish verse, he adds, "*The inimitable beauty of the original induced a variety of versifiers to mingle stanzas of their own composition; but it is the painful, though necessary duty of an editor, by the touchstone of truth, to discriminate such dross from the gold of antiquity;*" and, in the note to

* *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, consisting of historical and romantic ballads, collected by Walter Scott, esq.—S.

that pathetic and truly beautiful elegy, Lady Bothwell's Lament, he says the four stanzas he has given appear to be all that are genuine. It has since, as you observe, been proved, that both the Flodden Dirges, even as he has given them, are modern. Their beauty was a touchstone, as he expresses it, which might have shewn their younger birth to any critic, whose taste had not received the broad impression of that torpedo, anti-quarianism.

You, with all your strength, originality, and richness of imagination, had a slight touch of that torpedo, when you observed, that the manner of the ancient minstrels is so happily imitated in the first Flowers of the Forest, that it required the strongest positive evidence to convince you that the song was of modern date. The phrasology, indeed, is of their texture; but, comparing it with the border ballads in your first volume, I should have pronounced it modern, from its so much more touching regrets, so much more lively pictures.

Permit me too to confess, that I can discover very little of all which constitutes poetry in the first old tale, which you call beautiful, excepting the second stanza, which gives the unicorns at the gate, and the portraits, "with holly aboon their brie." To give them, no great reach of fancy was requisite; but still they are picture, and, as such, poetry.

Lord Maxwell's Good Night is but a sort of inventory in rhyme of his property, interspersed with some portion of tenderness for his wife, and some expressions of regard for his friends; but the first has no picture, and the latter little pathos. That ballad induced me; by what appeared its deficiencies, to attempt a somewhat more poetic leave-taking of house, land, and live-stock. My ballad does not attempt the pathetic, and you will smile at my glossary Scotch.

Mr. Erskine's supplemental stanzas to the poem, asserted to have been written by Collins on the Highland superstitions, have great merit, and no inferiority to those whose manner they assume.

In the border ballads, the first strong rays from the Delphic orb illuminate Jellom Grame, in the 4th, 16th, 17th, 18th, and 20th stanzas. There is a good corpse-picture in Clerk Saunders, the rude original, as you observe, of a ballad

in Percy, which I have thought furnished Burger with the hint for his Leonore. How little delicate touches have improved this verse in Percy's imitation!

"O! if I come within thy bower
I am no mortal man!
And if I kiss thy rosy lip
Thy days will not be long*."

And now, in these border ballads, the dawn of poesy, which broke over Jellom Grame, strengthens on its progress. Lord Thomas and fair Annie has more beauty than Percy's ballad of that title. It seems injudiciously altered from this in your collection; but the Binnorie, of endless repetition, has nothing truly pathetic; and the ludicrous use made of the drowned sister's body, by the harper making a harp of it, to which he sung her dirge in her father's hall, is contemptible.

Your dissertation preceding Tam Lane, in the second volume, is a little mine of mythologic information and ingenious conjecture, however melancholy the proofs it gives of dark and cruel superstition. Always partial to the fairies, I am charmed to learn that Shakspeare civilised the elfins, and, so doing, endeared their memory on English ground. It is curious to find the Grecian Orpheus metamorphosed into a king of Winchelsea.

The Terrible Graces look through a couple of stanzas in the first part of Thomas the Rhymer, "O they rade on," &c. also, "It was mirk, mirk, night;" and potent are the poetic charms of the second part of this oracular ballad, which you confess to have been modernized; yet more potent in the third. Both of them exhibit tender touches of sentiment, vivid pictures, landscapes from nature, not from books, and all of them worthy the author of Glenfinlas.

"O tell me how to woo thee" is a pretty ballad of those times, in which it was the fashion for lovers to worship their mistresses, and when ballads, as you beautifully observe, reflected the setting rays of chivalry. Mr. Leyden's Cout Keelder pleases me much. The first is a sublime stanza, and sweet are the landscape-touches in the 3d, 10th, and 11th, and striking the winter simile in the 9th.

* This stanza has no rhymes, but we do not miss them, so harmonious is the metre.—S.

The picture of the fern is new in poetry,
and to the eye, thus,

"The next blast that young Keelder blew,
The wind grew deadly still:
Yet the sleek fern, with fingery leaves,
Wav'd wildly o'er the hill."

The "wee demon" is admirably imagined.

And now the poetic day, which had gradually risen into beauty and strength through this second volume, sets nobly amidst the sombre yet often-illuminated grandeur of Glenfinlas.

Permit me to add one observation to this already long epistle. The battle of Flodden-field, so disastrous to Scotland, has been, by two poetic females, beautifully mourned; but your boasted James the Fourth deserved his fate, from the ungenerous advantage he sought to take of Henry the Eighth, by breaking the peace, without provocation, when that monarch was engaged in a war with France. So deserve all the rulers of nations, who, unstimulated by recent injuries, thus unclasp "the purple testament of bleeding war."

Perhaps this voluminous intrusion on your time will be thought merciless; but it seemed to me that barren thanks, and indiscriminate praise, was an unworthy acknowledgment of the honour conferred upon me by the gift of these highly curious and ingenious books.

A bright luminary in this neighbourhood recently shot from its sphere, with awful and deplored suddenness—Dr. Darwin, on whose philosophical talents and dissertations, so ingeniously conjectural, the adepts in that science looked with admiring, if not always acquiescent respect; in whose creative, gay, luxuriant, and polished imagination, and harmonious numbers, the votaries of poetry basked delighted; and on whose discernment into the cause of diseases, and skill in curing them, his own and the neighbouring counties reposed. He was born to confute, by his example, a frequent assertion, that the poetic fancy loses its fine efflorescence after middle life. The Botanic Garden, one of the most highly imaginative poems in our language, was begun after its author had passed his forty-sixth year. I have the honour to remain, sir, &c.

LETTER CVIII.

Anna Seward to Miss Fern.

Lichfield, Feb. 7, 1806.

AFTER a seven weeks' stay with me, Mrs. Martin and her daughters are preparing to quit my roof for Mr. Hinckley's, and I trust you will hasten to resume your friendly influence over my many wants, and few solitary hours. My health and my heart have need of you. We will often resume lord Orford's letters, and bask in the sunshine of their spirit.

Often have I seen strange contrarieties in the human soul; never any which surprised me more than in that of our sometime Horace Walpole. His delightful letters have not only amused me infinitely, but filled me with contrition for the long injustice which I had done to his heart, instigated by my indignation over his conduct to poor Chatterton, which excited so much general reprobation, and which certainly deprived the world of his glorious talents.

I am now convinced, that lord Orford was no more answerable for that disastrous event than is the man, who, by a random and inconsiderate shot, deprives an illustrious stranger of life; and for the following reason: Lord Orford was an extraordinary instance of the possibility of possessing the most brilliant wit and genuine humour, extensive knowledge of history and of the belles lettres, with a certain degree of poetic genius, elegant though not eminent; all this without the least perception of the pathetic, or the sublime excellencies, either in prose or verse.

This strange limitation of talents so considerable, this scarcely conceivable defect in the organization of his sensibilities, this miraculous separation of warmth of heart, of cordial sympathizing friendship, from any sympathy with imaginary sorrows, however consonant to truth, nature, and real life!—ah! what a phenomenon in character do they present.

At first view, it may seem scarcely less strange when I declare, that these contradictions, these defects in the feelings, this abortion in the talents of lord Orford, unfolding themselves in his epistles, have taught me to love and delight in the man, whom I had so long detested

for his apparently unfeeling conduct towards the ill-starred Chatterton; convinced, as I was, that it must have proceeded from cold pride and induration of heart.

On inspecting the recesses of his bosom, disclosed in these fascinating letters, I find, that I might as justly have condemned a blind man for not distinguishing colours, as the sometime Horace Walpole for not perceiving that the manifest deception, offered to his consideration, as poetic relics of antiquity, was replete with the noblest effusions of a creative and sublime genius that ever glowed in the fancy of opening youth; that, compared with Milton's compositions at the same early age, their immense transcendency is apparent, and that Chatterton stood unparalleled, not only by him, but by any child of sixteen that was ever born for the glory of human intellect; that, with every cultivation which learning could bestow, no rose of the Pierian garden ever equalled this amaranth of the desert.

Alas! it was not for the man, whose strangely tempered perceptions could feel none of the varied and matchless excellencies of the *Clarissa* and *Grandison*; and who could despise the most splendid metaphysic poem in any language (*Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination*), to discern the grandeur of Chatterton's muse. Her assumed antiquity was an evident, though most pardonable fraud. Lord Orford was disgusted by the fraud, while, to his narrow ideas of poetic excellence, the result appeared to be modern fustian, in the robe of antiquity.

As to the admiration frequently expressed in these letters, of Homer and Virgil, Pindar, Shakspeare, and Milton, that was the poetic religion of his lordship's classic education. If Homer, Virgil, Pindar, Milton, and the tragic parts of Shakspeare's plays, had been first introduced to him in ripened life, and as recent compositions, I dare be sure they would have appeared heavy, tiresome, and bombastic. But for his early personal affection for Gray, so had he deemed of his inspirations. As it was, cold and scanty is the praise allotted to him in the letters of this celebrated commoner, and at length peer of the realm.

Though Akenside stands not an equal

height with those pre-eminent bards, yet is his place of great elevation; and he, who was not aware that it was elevated, was not likely to discern the radiance of the new *Georgium Sidus* in the poetic hemisphere.

Then Richardson, whose prose has all the painting, the imagery, the dramatic spirit, and the pathetic powers of the best poetry; what but pity remains for an ingenious man, who has pronounced the grand works of such a writer vapid and dull!

If I was shewn compositions, which I thought turgid as well as deceptive, and believed them the fabrication of a hack writer, I should advise him, as lord Orford did, to renounce the muses and mind his engrossing. Wonder, therefore, at defective taste, rather than condemnation for supposed cruelty, is all we have a right to feel on that unhappy theme.

Of unworthy pride, which I had imputed to lord O. as adjunct to hardness of heart, his letters also acquit him. The solicitous attention and time which he bestowed upon that incorrigibly imprudent and unstable draughtsman, Bentley, is acquittance positive on that head. So also his indulgent and constant friendship for Mrs. Clive, of comic memory, even after he became conscious that she drank, and could be provoked to swear like a trooper. Thus this brilliant mortal, whom I thought so haughty and heartless, comes out, as to benevolence, pure gold from this epistolary ordeal; and I cordially remit to his affections the gross defects of his taste.

Thus, during a little gleam of exemptive health, I have been induced to throw on paper, for your consideration, some of those reflections which my ever busy mind has recently revolved. If I could think less frequently, or more superficially, it would probably be better for my impaired constitution. In youth, the energetic employment of the intellectual faculties strengthens and improves them, without injuring the bodily ones; but mental, as well as corporal repose, is the necessary cradle of advanced life. My disorder produces much actual drowsiness; that is in itself disorder. When I am awake, I cannot persuade my spirit to feed on the opiate themes of common-life occurrences. Adieu! We shall soon, I trust, converse instead of correspond-

ing, which is a much less pressure upon the fibres of the brain: it is then that we skirmish away with the rising ideas, even on abstract subjects, without intense investigation.

FROM THE

LETTERS OF BISHOP WARBURTON.

LETTER CIX.

Mr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd.

Bedford-row, October 28th, 1749.

Dear sir,

I DEFERRED making my acknowledgments for the favour of your last obliging letter till I came to town. I am now got hither to spend the month of November: the dreadful month of November! when the little wretches hang and drown themselves, and the great ones sell themselves to the C—— and the devil. I should be glad if any occasion would bring you hither, that I might have the pleasure of waiting on you—I don't mean to the C—— and the devil, but in Bedford Row. Not that I would fright you from that earthly Pandemonium, a C——, because I never go hither. On the contrary, I wish I could get you into the circle. For (with regard to you) I should be something of the humour of honest Cornelius Agrippa, who, when he left off conjuring, and wrote of the *vanity* of the art, could not forbear to give receipts, and teach young novices the way to raise the devil. One method serves for both, and his political representatives are rendered tractable by the very same method, namely, *fumigations*. But these high mysteries you are unworthy to partake of. You are no true son of Agrippa, who choose to waste your incense in raising the meagre spirit of friendship, when the wisdom of the prince of this world would have inspired you with more profitable sentiments.

Let me hear, at least, of your health; and believe that no absence can lessen what the expressions of your good will have made me, that is to say, very much your servant.

I have now put that volume, of which

the epistle to Augustus is part, to the press; so should be obliged to you to send it by your letter carrier, directed to Mr. Knapton, bookseller, in Ludgate-street. But you must be careful *not* to pay the carriage, because that will endanger a miscarriage, as I have often experienced.—I intend to soften the conclusion of the note about Grotius and the archbishop, according to your friendly hint.

LETTER CX.

Mr. Hurd to Dr. Warburton.

Shifnal, September 13th, 1755.

YOUR truly friendly letter, of the 31st past, brought me all the relief I am capable of in my present situation. Yet that relief had been greater, if the fact had been, as you suppose, that the best of fathers was removing from me, in this maturity of age, by a gradual insensible decay of nature; in which case, I could have drawn to myself much ease from the considerations you so kindly suggest to me. But it is not his being out of all hope of recovery (which I had known long since, and was prepared for), but his being in perpetual pain, that afflicts me so much. I left him, last night, in this disconsolate condition. So near a prospect of death, and so rough a passage to it—I own to you I cannot be a witness of this, in one whom nature and ten thousand obligations have made so dear to me, without the utmost uneasiness. Nay, I think the very temper and firmness of mind, with which he bears this calamity, sharpens my sense of it. I thank God, an attachment to this world has not as yet been among my greater vices. But were I as fond of it as prosperous and happy men sometimes are, what I have seen and felt for this last month were enough to mortify such foolish affections. And in truth it would amaze one, that a few such instances as this, which hardly any man is out of the reach of, did not strike dead all the passions, were it not that Providence has determined, in spite of ourselves, by means of these instincts, to accomplish its own great purposes. But why do I trouble my best friend with this sad tale and rambling reflections? I designed only to tell him that

I am quite unhappy here; and that, though it is more than time for me to return to Cambridge, I have no power of coming to a thought of leaving this place. However, a very few weeks, perhaps a few days, may put an end to this irresolution.

I thank you for your fine observation on the neglect to reform the ecclesiastical laws. It is a very material one, and deserves to be well considered. But of these matters when I return to my books, and my mind is more easy.

I wish you all the health and all the happiness your virtues deserve, and this wretched world will admit of. I know of nothing that reconciles me more to it than the sense of having such a friend as you in it. I have the greatest obligations to Mrs. Warburton and the rest of your family for their kind condolence. My best respects and sincerest good wishes attend them. I must ever be, &c.

R. HURD.

LETTER CXI.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, Dec. 1, 1755.

I HAVE to tell you, that it has pleased God to release my poor father from his great misery. You will guess the rest, when I acquaint you that his case was cancerous. All his family have great reason to be thankful for his deliverance: and yet I find myself not so well prepared for the stroke as I had thought. I blame myself now for having left him. Though when I was with him, as I could not hide my own uneasiness, I saw it only added to his. I know not what to say. He was the best of men in all relations, and had a generosity of mind that was amazing in his rank of life. In his long and great affliction he shewed a temper which philosophers only talk of. If he had any foible, it was, perhaps, his too great fondness for the unworthiest of his sons.—My mother is better than could be expected from her melancholy attendance. Yet her health has suffered by it. I have many letters to write, but would not omit communicating what so tenderly concerns me, to my best friend.

I thank you for your book and your

kind letters. Mr. Balguy and I think much more hardly of Jortin than you do. I could say much of this matter at another time.

LETTER CXII.

Dr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd.

I OUGHT rather to rejoice with all, who loved that good man lately released, than to condole with them. Can there be a greater consolation to all his friends than that he was snatched from human miseries to the reward of his labours? You I am sure must rejoice, amidst all the tenderness of filial piety and the softening of natural affection; the gentle melancholy, that the incessant memory of so indulgent a parent and so excellent a man will make habitual, will be always brightened by the sense of his present happiness; where, perhaps, one of his pleasures is his ministering care over those which were dearest to him in life. I dare say this will be your case, because the same circumstances have made it mine. My great concern for you was while your father was languishing on his death-bed. And my concern at present is for your mother's grief and ill state of health. True tenderness for your father, and the dread of adding to his distresses, absolutely required you to do what you did, and to retire from so melancholy a scene.

As I know your excellent nature, I conjure you by our friendship to divert your mind by the conversation of your friends, and the amusement of trifling reading, till you have fortified it sufficiently to bear the reflection on this common calamity of our nature, without any other emotion than that occasioned by a kind of soothing melancholy, which perhaps keeps it in a better frame than any other kind of disposition.

You see what man is, when never so little within the verge of matter and motion in a ferment. The affair of Lisbon has made men tremble, as well as the continent shake, from one end of Europe to another, from Gibraltar to the Highlands of Scotland. To suppose these desolations the scourge of Heaven for human impieties, is a dreadful reflection; and yet to suppose ourselves in a forlorn and fatherless world, is ten

times a more frightful consideration. In the first case, we may reasonably hope to avoid our destruction by the amendment of our manners ; in the latter, we are kept incessantly alarmed by the blind rage of warring elements.

The relation of the captain of a vessel, to the Admiralty, as Mr. Yorke told me the story, has something very striking in it. He lay off Lisbon on this fatal 1st of November, preparing to hoist sail for England. He looked towards the city in the morning, which gave the promise of a fine day, and saw that proud metropolis rise above the waves, flourishing in wealth and plenty, and founded on a rock that promised a poet's eternity, at least, to its grandeur. He looked an hour after, and saw the city involved in flames, and sinking in thunder. A sight more awful mortal eyes could not behold on this side the day of doom. And yet does not human pride make us miscalculate ? A drunken beggar shall work as horrid a desolation, with a kick of his foot against an ant-hill, as subterraneous air and fermented minerals to a populous city. And if we take in the universe of things rather with a philosophic than a religious eye, where is the difference in point of real importance between them ? A difference there is, and a very sensible one, in the merit of the two societies. The little Troglodytes amass neither superfluous nor imaginary wealth ; and consequently have neither drones nor rogues amongst them. In the confusion, we see, caused by such a desolation, we find, by their immediate care to repair and remedy the general mischief, that none abandons himself to despair, and so stands not in need of bedlams and Coroners' inquests : but, as the poet says,

" In this, 'tis God directs ; in that, 'tis man."

And you will say, remember the *sovereignty of reason*. To this I reply, that the common definition of man is false : he is not a *reasoning animal*. The best you can predicate of him is, that he is an *animal capable of reason*, and this too we take upon old tradition. For it has not been my fortune yet to meet, I won't say with any one man, but I may safely swear with any one order of men, who ever did reason.

LETTER CXIII.

Dr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, Feb. 17, 1759.

THOUGH I do not altogether approve of your modest scheme for the furniture of your house, I altogether dislike your modest scheme for the future furniture of your mind. What you mention are indeed the necessities of it ; but not so much necessities for yourself, as necessities for the public, and the foundation of erecting something lasting for their use.—Men are never so fond of moralizing as when they are ill at ease. I hope that is not your case. If it be, you wrong your friend, who has a right to know it, and to relieve it.

I was in hopes that on coming to Leicester you would have had intelligence of your papers. As that is not the case, you ought immediately to advertise them, with a slight reward, as things *of no use but to the owner*. I can say this, after twenty years' existence, of the sheets of the Divine Legation ; and sure you may say it of things not *in esse* but *in posse*. However, we will both hope they may be of *use* to posterity. Seriously, Dr. Birch tells me (for your loss makes much noise, so much does the malignity of men delight in mischance), that 'tis very probable the packet will be presently brought to you by such an advertisement.

Weston, the son of the late bishop of Exeter, the present Gazetteer by profession, by inclination a Methodist, and connected with Thomas and Sherlock, is writing against my conclusion of the Dedication to the Jews, concerning *Naturalization*. It seems he wrote in defence of that bill. The father was tutor to Walpole, and the son is one of his pupils. I am afraid he will be a sharer in that silent contempt with which I treat my answerers.

God bless you. You know it is the court phrase, speaking of some favourite chaplain, that *he should be pushed*. I know but of one parson that is capable of being *pushed*, and that is yourself : every body else I meet with are full ready to go of themselves. If you be sparing of your letters to me while I am in town, I will call you a niggard, for I am sure that will anger the generosity of your nature most.

I have a fine addition to your note on

Falkland and Walpole. If you have an opportunity, why should not you use it now? The addition is occasioned by a silly thing said by Spence, in the Life of his Taylor, but whose consequences are not trifling.

P. S. I am pleased that you are obliged to be at Leicester, and with Mrs. Arnald, till the settled spring invites you to Thurcaston; or rather till your settled love of us brings you to London, to have one peep more at young Ascanius, and see, before inoculation,

*"Ecquid in antiquam virtutem animosque viriles
Et pater Æneas et avunculus excitat Hector?"*

LETTER CXIV.

Mr. Hurd to Dr. Warburton.

Thurcaston, August 26, 1739.

COMING home this week from a short visit to Mr. Mason and Mr. Wright, of Romely, I received your two favours of the 14th and 19th, together with the enclosed letter of Mr. Yorke; which had the effect you kindly intended by it, to afford me much pleasure. It was impossible not to sympathise with him in his pathetic lamentations for his late loss; and not to esteem the vein of pious reflection with which he supports it. Humanity is but a poor thing at best; but in certain situations is capable of becoming so wretched, that, let proud philosophy say what it will, it is not to be endured without the aids and hopes of religion.

For his obliging compliment on the *Dialogues*, it was perhaps the more acceptable, as the general opinion of them, as far as I can collect it, is not the most favourable. The *Dialogues* themselves, it is said, might pass, but for the *notes and preface*. It is true, I have heard of no good reason why this playful part of my book should be so particularly disrelished. But there is no disputing about tastes; and if such be that of the public, I have that deference for its decisions which *Fenelon* had for the Pope's, and will myself retract, that is, withdraw, them in another edition. What particularly pleases me in Mr. Yorke's compliment is, that he finds an *extraordinary reach of thought in some passages*. For it would have been mortifying, indeed, if my pen had so far disguised the excel-

lent hints you gave me for the two last *Dialogues*, as not to be taken notice of by a capable and attentive reader.

The composition of the characters in lord Clarendon's *Continuation* is, as you truly observe, its chief fault: of which the following, I suppose, may be the reason. Besides that business, and age, and misfortunes had perhaps sunk his spirit, the *Continuation* is not so properly the History of the first six years of Charles the Second, as an anxious apology for the share himself had in the administration. This has hurt the composition in several respects. Amongst others, he could not with decency allow his pen that scope in his delineation of the chief characters of the court, who were all his personal enemies, as he had done in that of the enemies to the king and monarchy in the grand rebellion. The endeavour to keep up a shew of candour, and especially to prevent the appearance of a rancorous resentment, has deadened his colouring very much, besides that it made him sparing in the use of it. Else, his inimitable pencil had attempted, at least, to do justice to Bennet, to Berkeley, to Coventry, to the nightly Cabal of facetious memory, to the Lady, and, if his excessive loyalty had not intervened, to his infamous master himself. That there was somewhat of this in the case, seems clear from some passages where he was not so restrained; such, for instance, as the additional touches to Falkland's and Southampton's characters. With all this, I am apt to think there may still be something in what I said of the nature of the subject. Exquisite virtue and enormous vice afford a fine field for the historian's genius. And hence Livy and Tacitus are, in their way, perhaps, equally entertaining. But the little intrigues of a selfish court, about carrying or defeating this or that measure, about displacing this and bringing in that minister, which interest nobody very much but the parties concerned, can hardly be made very striking by any ability of the relator. If cardinal de Retz has succeeded, his scene was busier, and of another nature from that of lord Clarendon. But, however this be, and when all abatements are made, one finds the same gracious facility of expression; above all, one observes the same love of virtue and dignity of sentiment, which ennobled the *History of*

the *Rebellion*. And if *this* raises one's ideas most of the *writer*, the *Continuation* supports and confirms all that one was led to conceive of the *man* and the *minister*.

I return Mr. Yorke's letter, by this first return of the post, with many thanks ; and am ever, &c.

LETTER CXV.

Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, March 4, 1760.

My lord,

I HAD your favour of the 19th past, and about the same time received the confirmation of Mr. Allen's recovery, under his own hand. I hope this fit is now over. But it affects me very much to think that the declining years of this good man are likely to be rendered so uneasy to him, as they must be, by the frequent returns of this disorder.

Mrs. Warburton is always extremely kind. From a letter she did me the favour to write to me after her interview with Mrs. Johnson, I find she is intent on dignifying all your lordship's domestics, as well as your footmen. For whereas the chaplains of other bishops, and even Lambeth chaplains, are usually thrust, with the other lumber of the family, into any blind corner, she invites me to repose, in state, in the *Abbot's apartment* at Gloucester. You will judge, after this, if I can have the heart to say one word against the *shoulder-knots*.

Your early intelligence of the success of Dr. Richardson was very obliging. I am glad of it, because I know it will make him very happy ; and because a piece of justice is done at last upon a man, who had no regard to the decency of his own character.

Your lordship is always so good to me, that you will be pleased to hear of the health and usual cheerfulness of my mother. She is in a disposition rather to beg your blessing than pay compliments. Though, to conceal nothing, I must tell you her infirmity, that she takes all bishops for such as she reads in her Bible they should be. So that 'tis only by accident she does not misapply the veneration she professes for your lordship.

I resolve to have your Sermon, though

at the expense of *sixpence* ; which your lordship will consider as one argument, amongst others, of the regard with which I am ever, &c.

LETTER CXVI.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, March 31, 1760.

I HAVE two kind letters of yours to acknowledge.

I am extremely glad that good Mrs. Hurd enjoys reasonable health. Her mistake about bishops pleases me the more, as an excellent woman, like herself (my mother), lived and died in this capital error.

You ought not to have excepted my Sermon from the poverty of the press. And in the dusky road towards antiquity, if it drew you aside by its glimmering, you fared no better than many before you have done, who, in a bad light, have mistaken a glow-worm for a jewel.

I am inclined to think that Mr. Allen is not likely to come to London this spring. For my part, I shall leave this place on the recess at Easter ; and, if he has laid aside the thoughts of his journey, I shall not return, but take to the Bath waters ; the first trial I make for my old complaint of indigestion, after having tried every thing else to little purpose.

Poor Mr. Towne rather goes backward than advances in his health. He talks of coming this spring to town for his health ; in which I think he judges right ; as little opinion as I have of the physical tribe.

LETTER CXVII.

Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, June 22, 1760.

THOUGH your lordship can never come sooner to me than I wish, I confess the time of your moving northward is earlier than I expected. I should otherwise have made some inquiries after Mrs. Warburton's and my little friend's projected flight along with you, which I have been feeding upon in imagination this good while, but which, I am

afraid, is now laid aside by your lordship's mentioning nothing at all of it. As there is now so little time to deliberate upon the matter, I will only say that I shall be at home and alone at the time you mention; for I hope I need not say that my little house, with the best accommodations it can afford, are always wholly at Mrs. Warburton and your lordship's service.

The roads are so uncommonly good after this dry spring, that there will be no difficulty in coming hither in your chaise. However, my servant shall be in waiting for you at the Cranes, in Leicester, on Tuesday morning, either to shew you the best way for the carriage, or to have my horses ready, if your lordship should prefer riding.

Remorseless death has cut down poor Chapman in the flower of his life and fortune. I knew him formerly very well. He was, in his nature, a vain and busy man. I found he had not virtue enough to prefer a long and valuable friendship to the slightest, nay almost to no prospect of interest. On which account I dropped him. But the rebuff he afterwards met with in the career of his ambition, might help, and I hope did, to detach his mind from the world, and to make him know himself better.—His preferences, I suppose, are flying different ways. An acquaintance of mine at St. John's is, I hear, besieging the great man for his little government of Magdalen.

I have only to add my humble service to Mrs. Warburton and the family, together with my best wishes for your lordship's good journey to Thurstaston; which has long prided itself in having given birth to one good bishop, and will not be insensible to the honour of being visited by another. At least, I can answer for its rector, who is ever, with all devotion, &c.

LETTER CXVIII.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, November 4, 1760.

I HAVE your kind letter of the 24th past, and would not leave this place without acknowledging it. I am going to look about me in this *new world*, but am in no more hurry than some older bishops

are in their journey to one still *newer*. The settlement of the court and ministry is yet perhaps as little known to themselves as to us. All depends upon the disposition of a new king, who is always the darling of the people, and who suffer him to do all he pleases: as he grows stale, they suffer him to do nothing which they can hinder him from doing.

I received a kind letter from Mr. Yorke. He talks still of the chapter of accidents with regard to Lincoln's Inn. As we are turning over a new leaf, that chapter of accidents may be at the beginning. They talk of changes in the law: but they, who talk, know just as much as you or I.

You shall hear from me again when I get to town, and have seen a little of the *carte du pais*.

Mr. Allen and family follow me in a week or fortnight. He goes to renew his contract with the government. My wife, I fancy, will stay behind, the Bath waters being now very necessary for the perfect re-establishment of her health.

Dr. Balguy is much recovered, and will leave Bath in a week or fortnight: but to return at spring. He goes to Winchester; from thence to his mother's: and from her, in March, back to Bath. His route lies near you.

All here are tolerably well, and entirely yours. With what affection I am so, you know: with what effect, God knows. But his providence, which brought us together, will keep us together. For the rest, *caliginosa nocte premit*.

LETTER CXIX.

From the same to the same.

Grosvenor Square, Jan. 6, 1761.

I AM here alone, and have been so this fortnight. But I have the satisfaction to tell you, that all the family are well at Prior Park, which I have the pleasure to believe is more agreeable to you to know, than any thing I could tell you from the great world; that is, from this great *congeries* of vice and folly.

Sherlock was much more to blame for not letting his chaplain understand early that he was a blockhead by birth, than the chaplain for not giving his

master the late intelligence that his parts were decayed by time; because the bishop, with all his infirmities of age, could see the one; but his chaplain, at his best, could never find out the other.

The *Poem on the Death of a Lady* I had communicated to me by lord Holderness. You may be sure I did not slip that opportunity of saying to the patron all that was fitting of the author and his poem. He considered what I said as flattering to himself, for he acquainted our friend that he had shewn me the poem; as I understand by a letter I have received from Aston, pretty much to the same purpose with the account I had from you of that matter.

In asking after *addresses**, you ask after those *ephemera*, or water-flies, whose existence, the naturalists tell us, is comprised within the compass of a summer's day. Indeed, these winter-flies have a still shorter date. Into what dark regions mine is retired, with the rest, I don't know. But if you would amuse yourself with my thoughts, for sixpence you may have my *Discourse on the Lord's Supper*; for, as small as the price is, it is too big to send you in my frank.

On this occasion, I will tell you what (though perhaps I may have told it you before) I said in the drawing-room to a knot of courtiers in the old king's time. One chanced to say, he heard the king was not well. Hush, said colonel Robinson, it is not polite or decent to talk in this manner; the king is always well and in health; you are never to suppose that the diseases of his subjects ever approach his royal person. I perceive then, colonel, replied I, there is some difference between your master and mine. Mine was subject to all human infirmities, sin excepted: yours is subject to none, sin excepted. But as concerning my *Discourse*, it is assuredly orthodox: so says the archbishop of Canterbury; and that I have demolished both Hoadly and Bossuet: for

"Tis the same rope at either end they twist."

The archbishop did not say this, but Mr. Pope. However, the archbishop says, what you are likely enough to say after him--that the people, for whom

* The Address of the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese of Gloucester.—II.

I intend this edition, are not likely to profit much by it.

Decay of parts all must have, if not feel, poets as well as priests: and it is true what was told you, that Voltaire has lately given evidence to this truth. What you say of this poet's turn would make an excellent note to—*But, sage historians, 'tis your part, &c.* and perhaps shall do so.

God bless you; and, when you write next, let me know how your good mother does; that is, whether her health continues such as not to increase your cares and anxieties.

LETTER CXX.

Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, Dec. 25, 1761.

THOUGH I troubled your lordship with a letter not long since, yet you will perhaps excuse my appearing before you, at this time, with my Christmas salutations: a good old custom, which shews our forefathers made a right use of the *best tidings* that ever came from Heaven; I mean, to increase *good-will towards men*.

Your lordship will take a guess, from the sermonic cast of this sentence, at my late employment. Though I am not likely to be called upon in this way, I know not what led me to try my hand at a popular sermon or two: I say *popular*, because the subjects and manner of handling are such, but not of the sort that are proper for my Leicestershire *people*. To what purpose I have taken this trouble, your lordship may one day understand. For you, who are my example and guide in these exercises, must also be my judge. If you blame, I may learn to write better: if you approve, I shall require no other *theatre*. But when does your lordship think to instruct us on this head, in the address to your Clergy? Certainly, the common way of sermonizing is most wretched: neither sense, nor eloquence; reason, nor pathos. Even our better models are very defective. I have lately turned over Dr. Clarke's large collection, for the use of my parish; and yet, with much altering, and many additions, I have been able to pick out no more than eight or ten that I could think

passable for that purpose. He is clear and happy enough in the explication of Scripture; but miserably cold and lifeless; no invention, no dignity, no force; utterly incapable of enlarging on a plain thought, or of striking out new ones: in short, much less of a genius than I had supposed him.

'Tis well you have not my doings before you, while I am taking this liberty with my betters. But, as I said, your lordship shall one day have it in your power to revenge this flippancy upon me.

Your lordship has furnished me with a good part of my winter's entertainment, I mean by the books you recommended to me. I have read the Political Memoirs of Abbé St. Pierre. I am much taken with the old man: honest and sensible; full of his projects, and very fond of them; an immortal enemy to the glory of Louis the XIVth, I suppose, in part, from the memory of his disgrace in the academy, which no Frenchman could ever forget; in short, like our Burnet, of some importance to himself, and a great talker. These, I think, are the outlines of his character. I love him for his generous sentiments, which in a churchman of his communion are the more commendable, and indeed make amends for the lay-bigotry of Mr. Crevier.

I have by accident got a sight of this mighty *Fingal*. I believe I mentioned my suspicions of the *Fragments*: they are ten-fold greater of this epic poem. To say nothing of the want of *external evidence*, or, which looks still worse, his shuffling over in such a manner the little evidence he pretends to give us, every page appears to me to afford *internal evidence* of forgery. His very citations of parallel passages bear against him. In poems of such rude antiquity, there might be some flashes of genius. But here they are continual, and clothed in very classical expression. Besides, no images, no sentiments, but what are matched in other writers, or may be accounted for from usages still subsisting, or well known from the story of other nations: in short, nothing but what the enlightened editor can well explain himself. Above all, what are we to think of a long epic poem, disposed, in form, into six books, with a *beginning*, *middle*, and *end*, and enlivened, in the classic taste, with episodes? Still this is nothing. What are we to think of a

work of this length, preserved and handed down to us entire, by *oral tradition*, for 1400 years, without a chasm, or so much as a various reading, I should rather say, *speaking*? Put all this together, and if *Fingal* be not a forgery convict, all I have to say is, that the sophists have a fine time of it. They may write, and lie on, with perfect security. And yet has this prodigy of North-Britain set the world agape. Mr. Gray believes in it: and without doubt this Scotsman may persuade us, by the same arts, that *Fingal* is an original poem, as another employed to prove that Milton was a plagiarist. But let James Macpherson beware the consequence. *Truth will out*, they say, and then—

*"Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina,
Mævi."*

My dear lord, excuse this rhapsody, which I write *currente calamo*; and let me hear that your lordship, Mrs. Warburton, and the dear boy, are perfectly well. I think to write by this post to Mr. Allen.

LETTER CXXI.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, Dec. 27, 1761.

LET me wish you (as we all do) all the happiness that goodness can derive from this season.

The honour this country derives from the duke of York's visit can hardly compensate the bad news of a Spanish war, which puts the city of London in a consternation. This event does honour to Mr. Pitt's sagacity, and the wisdom of his advice upon it. Whether this war, which was foreseen by nobody to be inevitable but by him, can be successfully managed by any body but by him, time must shew; for I would not pretend to be wiser than our teachers, I mean, the news-writers, who refer all doubtful cases, as the Treasury does all desperate payments, to time. The best thing which time (since I wrote last) has brought to pass, is the advancement of Mr. Yorke to be attorney-general. I would have you, by all means, write him your compliments upon it; for, with a

high value, he has a great friendship for you. What you say of Hume is true: and (what either I said in my last, or intended to say) you have taught him to write so much better, that he has thoroughly confirmed your system.

I have been both too ill and too lazy to finish my discourse on the Holy Spirit. Not above half of it is yet printed.

I have been extremely entertained with the wars of Fingal. It can be no cheat, for I think the enthusiasm of this specifical sublime could hardly be counterfeited. A modern writer would have been less simple and uniform.—Thus far had I written when your letter of Christmas-day came to hand; as you will easily understand by my submitting to take shame upon me, and assuring you, that I am fully convinced of my false opinion delivered just above concerning Fingal. I did not consider the matter as I ought. Your reasons for the forgery are unanswerable. And of all these reasons, but one occurred to me, the *want of external evidence*; and this, I own, did shock me. But you have waked me from a very pleasing dream; and made me hate the impostor, which is the most uneasy sentiment of our waking thoughts.

I am much pleased with what you tell me of a set of sermons *ad populum*, I mean to people of condition. For nature formed you for, and providence will bring you to, another theatre. Your judgment of Clarke is, like your other judgments of men, perfectly exact and true.

I received a letter from Mason of the 14th, and he tells me news—that your Letters on Chivalry are in the press; and he desires, when they come out, I would send them to him in covers.

Sterne has published his fifth and sixth volumes of Tristram. They are wrote pretty much like the first and second; but whether they will restore his reputation as a writer with the public, is another question. The fellow himself is an irrecoverable scoundrel.

My Discourse on the Holy Spirit grows upon me, especially in the latter part about the Methodists, which is the part I could have wished would have grown the least. But a wen grows faster than sound flesh. I have yet printed off but 72 pages.

I think the booksellers have an intention of employing Baskerville to print

Pope in 4to.; so they sent me the last octavo to look over. I have added the enclosed to the long note in the beginning of the *Rape of the Lock*, in answer to an impertinence of Joseph Warton. When you have perused it, you will send it back.

I have sometimes thought of collecting my scattered anecdotes and critical observations together, for the foundation of a Life of Pope, which the booksellers tease me for. If I do that, all of that kind must be struck out of the notes of that edition. You could help me nobly to fill up the canvass.

LETTER CXXII.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, Nov. 24, 1762.

My dear rector of Folkton*,
THIS shall be only to remind you of what you may forget.

Imprimis, *your first fruits*. Your friend Pearson has put me in mind of this.

Item, Should you not write a letter of thanks to the chancellor, into whose favour you seem to have been much crept?

Item, Should you not write to the bishop of London, to thank him for his recommendation to his brothers.

Item, Should you not write a letter of thanks to the archbishop of York? I have sent you his letter enclosed.

These, you will say, are like a tailor's items of stay-tape and canvass. But remember, a coat cannot be made without them. I say nothing to you of the public. You are too much a philosopher to turn your eyes downwards on the dissensions of the great; and I cannot dwell upon the subject with any satisfaction. I am afraid we are at the eve of much disturbance, and ready to exchange a war abroad for one at home, less murderous, but more calumniating. We have long prayed to be delivered from our enemies; I wish the archbishop

* The sine cure rectory of Folkton, near Hunmanby, E. R. of Yorkshire, vacated by the translation of Dr. Osbaldiston from Carlisle to London, and given me by the chancellor, lord Northampton, at the request of Mr. Allen.—H.

could hit upon an efficacious *form of prayer*, to be delivered from ourselves. God bless you, and preserve the peace at Thurcaston, and in all its borders !

LETTER CXXIII.

Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, Feb. 10, 1763.

I THANK God that I can now, with some assurance, congratulate with myself on the prospect of your lordship's safe and speedy recovery from your sad disaster*.

Mrs. Warburton's last letter was a cordial to me; and, as the ceasing of intense pain, so this abatement of the fears I have been tormented with for three or four days past, gives a certain alacrity to my spirits, of which your lordship may look to feel the effects in a long letter.

And now supposing, as I trust I may do, that your lordship will be in no great pain when you receive this letter, I am tempted to begin, as friends usually do when such accidents befall, with my reprehensions, rather than condolence. I have often wondered why your lordship should not use a cane in your walks, which might haply have prevented this misfortune; especially considering that Heaven, I suppose the better to keep its sons in some sort of equality, has thought fit to make your outward sight by many degrees less perfect than your inward. Even I, a young and stout son of the church, rarely trust my firm steps into my garden, without some support of this kind. How improvident, then, was it in a father of the church to commit his unsteadfast footing to this hazard! Not to insist, that a good pastoral staff is the badge of your office, and, like a sceptre to a king, should be the constant appendage to a bishop.

This, and such like remonstrances, in the style, though not, I hope, in the spirit of Job's comforters, I should be apt to make, if the moment were favourable, and I were now at your bed-side; as I had been probably, ere this, if I could have found a supply for my two churches: for the person I engaged in the summer is run away, as you will think natural enough, when I tell you, he was let out

* Of breaking his left arm, by a fall in the garden of Prior Park.—H.

of gaol to be promoted to this service. But time and patience bring an end of all our distresses. I am at last promised a resident curate from Cambridge, but am to wait for him till after the Lent ordination.

I have this day a letter from Mr. Mason, who promises to call here next week in his way to London. He speaks in high admiration of your late books, especially of the part against Wesley. I hope, by the time he comes, to have another letter from Prior Park, and so to be able still more authentically to relieve his concern for the ill news I have to tell him.

Since Sunday last, I have been able to think of nothing with satisfaction. I shall now return, with some composure, to my books, and the finishing my two Dialogues on Travelling, or, as they almost pretend to be called, on Education. I have taken the greater pleasure in composing them, from the fancy that they may one day be of some use to my friend Ralph. And to this end I confess I have the ambition to have these papers pass through the hands of Mrs. Warburton; and if I may presume so far, to make a convert of her to my party; for at present I should not think it strange if she inclined to think favourably of so prevailing a practice. I have even that confidence in the goodness of my cause, that I should not be displeased if, in the mean time, she saw what Rousseau, who is fashionable in this part of his scheme, has to say in defence of this custom. In particular, I could wish to know what she thinks of the ingenious expedient of making Emilius fall desperately in love, before he sets out on his travels. It looks as if he took a mistress to be as necessary to a modern traveller as to an ancient knight errant. But does she conceive that this would be an adviseable experiment to be made, in due time, on her son; that he would or ought to go abroad in these circumstances, or that any good could come of it, if he did? I mean, though Rousseau himself, or another Mentor, should take the charge of the voyage. I take this violent machine of a love fit to be, in effect, a confession that no human means can be thought of to make this early travel of boys, for the purpose of education, either safe or useful. But I have a hundred other objections, of which, as

I said, I consent that Mrs. Warburton shall be the judge, if she will do me the honour to peruse these papers, and to moderate, as her good sense will well enable her to do, between Mr. Locke and lord Shaftesbury.

But to return to your lordship, whom I have left too long. Your continuance in bed is now, I hope, the most uneasy circumstance to be apprehended. It were well if you had the faculty of slumbering, which Pope celebrates in some prelates; or that you had the knack of dreaming awake, as might be said to the honour of some others. In either case, the time might pass away somewhat comfortably in your confinement. But in defect of these two remedies, which you cannot have, it may serve, for the time at least, to divert your thoughts, to cast your eye on this long letter. This is my best excuse for troubling you at this rate; and, now the secret is out, it is fit I take my leave as speedily as I can, with assuring you only of my constant prayers and best wishes for your lordship, and of the inviolable affection with which I must be ever, &c.

LETTER CXXIV.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, March, 1765.

My dearest friend,
You say true, I have a tenderness in my temper which will make me miss poor Stukeley; for, not to say that he was one of my oldest acquaintance, there was in him such a mixture of simplicity, drollery, absurdity, ingenuity, superstition, and antiquarianism, that he often afforded me that kind of well-seasoned repast, which the French call an *ambigu*, I suppose from a compound of things never meant to meet together. I have often heard him laughed at by fools, who had neither his sense, his knowledge, nor his honesty; though, it must be confessed, that in him they were all strangely travestied. Not a week before his death, he walked from Bloomsbury to Grosvenor Square, to pay me a visit: was cheerful as usual, and as full of literary projects. But his business was (as he heard Geekie was not likely to continue long) to desire I would give him the earliest notice of his death, for that

he intended to solicit for his prebend of Canterbury, by lord Chancellor and lord Cardigan. "For," added he, "one never dies the sooner, you know, for seeking preferment."

You have had a curiosity, which I never shall have, of reading Leland's Second Thoughts. I believe what you say; they are as nonsensical as his first.

It is as you say of Percy's Ballads. Pray is this the man who wrote about the Chinese? Antiquarianism is, indeed, to true letters, what specious fugguses are to the oak; which never shoot out and flourish till all the vigour and virtue of that monarch of the grove be effete, and near exhausted.

I envy the meeting of you three at Thurcaston: while I am confined here to the assemblies of pride and dulness.

I did mention to you, I think, the insult committed on the head of the supreme court of justice. The abuse was extreme, and much felt; generally resented, but I believe by nobody more than by me, as you will see by the enclosed. I have made what I had to say, on that head, the conclusion of my dedication*. It will please neither party. I was born to please no party. But what of that? In matters of moral conduct it is every honest man's chief concern to please himself.

P. S. When you have done with it, send it back.

LETTER CXXV.

From the same to the same.

February, 1767.

My dear friend,
I KNEW you to be a wise man; but not so wise as I find you; and therefore two or three days ago I wrote you a letter, directed to your chambers in Lincoln's Inn, which I suppose they will send you. You have done perfectly right in delegating Lincoln's Inn, this term, to your assistant. Millar has just left me; and I have ordered him to write to Cadell, to send you a copy of the Sermons into Leicestershire.

I shall put off my journey to Gloucester, and visitation, to suit your leisure. I am now thinking more seriously of my

* To lord Mansfield.—H.

last volume of the Divine Legation, and my mornings at present are amused with it. I have given a *key* to some material things in it, in one of these sermons; and some dissertations in others, that will be resumed when I publish (if I live to publish it) the last volume of that work. In the mean time, nothing can do me more honour than what you say of your sermonizing.

With regard to the many Harmonies—I have used none, nor read any: but I imagine that Le Clerc's and Toinard's must be the best; the last of which Mr. Locke speaks highly of.

As to our friend Balguy, I not long since received a letter from him from Cambridge, where he proposed to spend the Christmas with his friend, the master of St. John's. From whence, when he heard that you was come to town, he intended to go up, and spend the rest of the winter there on a trial; so that, if it agreed with him, he would spend every winter there. He mentioned nothing of the state of his health, further than what he had told me at Bath, at the latter end of the year, that he was of late afflicted with an asthma, and that the air at Winchester was too sharp for him.

P. S. In applauding your wisdom, I forgot all my selfishness. But, where a whole letter is free from it, it may be allowed to appear in a postscript. Your absence will be a great mortification, as well as loss to us both.

LETTER CXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Prior Park, Feb. 24. 1768.

I AM glad to understand, by yours of the 19th, that Thurcaston promises to set you right in your health.

I do intend to write to the two chiefs in a little time. Instead of 400*l.* I have destined 500*l.* for this business; thinking, on reflection, that 400*l.* would be too scanty for the purpose. The 500*l.* being in 4 per cent. annuities, will always bear that interest. The course four years, if three sermons a year; or three years, if four sermons. So much for that matter at present. I hope, that not only my Lecture, but yourself, will be benefited, in reputation at least,

by its commencing with you. Nor will you be hurried; for, at soonest, it will not begin till after the next long vacation, or with the new year.

You talk (and well) of your *golden age of study*, long past. For myself, I can only say, I have the same appetite for knowledge and learned converse I ever had; though not the same appetite for writing and printing. It is time to begin to live for myself; I have lived for others longer than they have deserved of me. I have had, from Dr. Balguy, a curious letter of what passed in the house of commons, on sir George Savile's motion for bringing in his bill for limiting the rights of the crown, by *prescription*. He was supported admirably well by our friend, who, mentioning the case of the duke of Portland (indeed the occasion of the motion), was answered, as to that point, by Norton, with a challenge to debate it then, or elsewhere; and, in a manner, according to his wont, a little brutally, though of the same side, as to the main question of subjecting the crown to the *prescriptive* laws of society. The truth was, that Norton, when attorney-general, had approved of, and advised the court measure against the duke of Portland. The opposition lost the motion, but by a very small majority, of 134 against 114.

Two or three posts ago I received a letter from Mr. Yorke, in which are these words:—"Mr. Hurd is retiring to his hermitage, till Easter term: Mrs. Yorke is become an attentive and admiring hearer of him. Her good works must supply my defects."—As yours now supply mine in that place.

LETTER CXXVII.

Dr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, July 18, 1768.

I WAS extremely happy, my dear lord, to find three of your kind letters, on my return to this place. I shall take them in the order of their dates.

That of the 5th, which contains the transcript to Mr. Yorke, has so much of yourself in every word, that I cannot but be tenderly affected by it. Your lordship knows how to work up an ideal picture in such a way as is likely to make it very acceptable to the party to whom it was presented.

I am glad to find that the *Life of Petrarch* did not disappoint your expectations. I must, at my leisure, look over these three volumes.

Your short note of the 6th calls upon me to wish you joy of having put the last hand to your generous and pious donation. Mr. Yorke, I suppose, will soon notify to me my appointment to be your first preacher. 'Tis true, as you say, *my own ease will be sacrificed to the occasion*; but that sacrifice would be well made, if I could hope to answer your design in any tolerable degree, and to support the honour of your Lecture; which last will very much depend on this first essay. I can only assure you of my best endeavours to do both. I think I may promise not to disgrace your institution by any extravagancies at setting out: and this caution, on such a subject, and in such times, may not be without its merit.

I now come to your favour of the 10th. The compliment from the University to our friend was out of the common forms: but his services to the body have been uncommonly great, and the sweetness of his manners makes him very popular.

Little Wat was sent back without a degree. The professor advised him to try his fortune again at Oxford, rather than return to Cambridge, as he talked of doing next term. He even told him, that success at Cambridge would not wipe off the dishonour of this rejection by his own university. The advice was good; but *the keen atmosphere* of Oxford may not agree with his constitution. It is well, if he has no better reason for taking this degree, than one of the half dozen pleasant ones you invent for him. I think it certain the two Sisters will act in concert on this occasion.

Poor Dr. Atwell's death throws a good living into the hands of Mr. Mason (for his late curate, Upton, told me it was capable of great improvement), and will, I hope, restore peace to the chapter of Gloucester. He was a man of sense and learning; but had a turn of mind too busy, and a temper too acrimonious, for his own ease, or that of others, with whom he had any near connection.—Whom does your lordship think of making rural dean in Stow deanery?

I thank you, my dear lord, for your congratulations on my advancement to

the doctorate; though I doubt it will seem a little incongruous in me to combat the scarlet whore in her own vestments. This did not JOSEPH MEDE; who should have been my example in every thing. But your lordship is too reasonable to expect either the talents or the *modesty* of that incomparable man, in your little adventurer against Babylon. After all, if I am defective in this quality, you must, in part, ascribe it to yourself, who have contributed so much to make me vainer than I ought to be: witness what you say of your portico-reading, in the close of this letter which I am now answering. But you suffer, I doubt, for your complaisance: for was not the rheumatic pain, you complain of, the fruit of regaling over my *Anti-Leland* in fresco?

Accept my best wishes for yourself, and for those who are so dear to you at Prior Park and at Claverton; and believe me to have the *fidelity* you so kindly ascribe to your ever affectionate

R. HURD.

LETTER CXXVIII.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, Dec. 26, 1768.

My dearest friend,
You make me very happy in your assurance to me of your perfect recovery. Had I lived in the time of Tully, and in his friendship, as I live in yours, I should have sacrificed to Æsculapius in behalf of your honest and skilful surgeon.

You give me equal satisfaction in the promise you make, of never declining me nor my friendship, when it is convenient or useful to you.

A bishop*, more or less, in this world, is nothing; and perhaps of as small account in the next. I used to despise him for his antiquarianism; but of late, since I grew old and dull myself, I cultivated an acquaintance with him for the sake of what formerly kept us asunder. Had he lived a little longer, I should have been capable of succeeding him in the high station of his presidency. We laugh at the wrong heads we neither care for, nor have to do with; but it is otherwise when our friends are struck with this malady. It seems poor

* Bishop of Carlisle, Dr. Lyttelton —H.

Towne thought my silence (which was so short that I did not advert to it) was mysterious; so he wrote me the enclosed; which, together with my answer on the blank, it is not worth while to send back. I took the liberty to mention your name; for his *theme* wanted an *example*.

Ralph is now at home, and taller, better, and wiser; if not by some inches, yet by some lines. As to his learning, I leave that to his master, with the same implicit faith that a good catholic does his salvation to the church.

You now only want our dear friend Dr. Balguy's company, which, if he be a man of his word, you will have, I suppose, in a few days, and then he will be assistant in our correspondence. I desire no larger a compass than you two will comprehend: the circle will not only be large, but perfect, while one leg is fixed, and the other always running. My dearest Mr. Hurd, ever yours,

W. GLOUCESTER.

FROM THE LETTERS OF

THE RT. HON. CHARLES JAMES FOX.

LETTER CXXXIX.

From Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

South Street, Dec. 17, 1796.

Sir,

I RECEIVED, a few days ago, your obliging letter, together with the very beautiful book which accompanied it. The dedication of such an edition of such an author is highly gratifying to me; and to be mentioned in such a manner, by a person so thoroughly attached to the principles of liberty and humanity, as you, sir, are known to be, is peculiarly flattering to me. I am, with great regard, sir, your obedient, humble servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXX.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, Monday.

Sir,

I RECEIVED, on Saturday, the second volume of Lucretius, together with a

pamphlet of yours upon Porson's Hecuba, for which I beg leave to return you my thanks. I had received, some time since, your letter, announcing to me the present of the Lucretius: but delayed answering it till I got the book, which my servant had not then an opportunity of sending me, lest there might be some mistake, from your mentioning Park Street, instead of South Street, for my residence. * * *

I feel it to be unpardonable in me to take advantage of your civility in sending me your books, to give you all this trouble; but I could not refuse myself so fair an opportunity of getting my doubts upon these passages cleared. * * *

I am, with great regard, sir, your most obedient servant, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXI.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, Friday.

Sir,

I RECEIVED yesterday your very obliging letter, for which I return you many thanks, as well as for the Bion and Moschus, which I will tell my servant to take an early opportunity of sending down to me. * * *

I am very sorry more encouragement has not been given to your Lucretius; but I am willing to flatter myself, that it is owing to many people not choosing to buy part of a work till the whole is completed. Both the Latin and Greek elegiac verses, in the beginning of the second volume, have given me great satisfaction; but I should fear the inferior rank which you give to our own country will not generally please; and certainly, in point of classical studies, or poetry, to which the mention of Apollo naturally carries the mind, we have no reason to place the French above us. I am with great regard, sir, your obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXII.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, Tuesday, Jan. 30, 1798.

Sir,

I HAVE received the third volume of your magnificent and beautiful Lucretius, for which I take the earliest oppor-

tunity of returning you my thanks. I cannot help flattering myself, that, now the work is complete, it will be far more patronized than it has hitherto been : but, it must be allowed, that these times are not favourable to expensive purchases of any kind ; and I fear, also, that we may add, that the political opinions we profess are far from being a recommendation to general favour, among those, at least, in whose power it is to patronize a work like yours.

I am at present rather engaged in reading Greek ; as it is my wish to recover, at least, if not to improve, my former acquaintance (which was but slight) with that language : but it will not be long before I enter regularly upon your Lucretius ; and when I do, if I should find any difficulties which your notes do not smooth, I shall take the liberty of troubling you for further information ; presuming upon the obliging manner in which you satisfied some doubts of mine, upon a former occasion. I am, with great regard, sir, your obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXIII.

From Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Feb. 2, 1798.

Sir,

It is an instance of my forgetfulness, but I really thought I had acknowledged the receipt of the publications which you were so good as to send me. Excepting the Pope, which I have not yet looked into, I read the rest with great pleasure ; and quite agree with you, that Bryant has made no case at all upon the subject of the Trojan war. I cannot refuse myself taking this opportunity of asking your opinion relative to the 24th Iliad, whether or not it is Homer's ? If it is, I think the passage about Paris and the Goddesses must be an interpolation : and if it is not, by denying Homer the glory of Priam's expedition from Troy, and interview with Achilles, we take from him the most shining passages, perhaps, in all his works. I am, sir, your obedient humble servant,

C. J. Fox.

P. S. Though I have not begun to read Lucretius regularly, yet I have dipped in it sufficiently to have no ap-

prehension of quoting the line of Phædrus. I think the elegiac verses to the poet are very classical and elegant indeed ; and, you know, we Etonians hold ourselves (I do not know whether or not others agree with us) of some authority, in matters of this sort.

LETTER CXXXIV.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, Feb. 16, 1798.

Sir,

I SHOULD have been exceedingly sorry, if, in all the circumstances you mention, you had given yourself the trouble of writing me your thoughts upon Homer's poetry ; indeed, in no circumstances, should I have been indiscreet enough to make a request so exorbitant : in the present, I should be concerned if you were to think of attending even to my limited question, respecting the authenticity of the 24th Iliad, or to any thing but your own business.

I am sorry your work is to be prosecuted ; because, though I have no doubt of a prosecution failing, yet I fear it may be very troublesome to you. If, either by advice or otherwise, I can be of any service to you, it will make me very happy ; and I beg you to make no scruple about applying to me : but I do not foresee that I can, in any shape, be of any use, unless it should be in pressing others, whom you may think fit to consult, to give every degree of attention to your cause. I suppose there can be little or no difficulty in removing, as you wish it, the difficulty from the publisher to yourself ; for to prosecute a printer, who is willing to give up his author, would be a very unusual, and certainly a very odious, measure.

I have looked at the three passages you mention, and am much pleased with them : I think " euralium," in particular, a very happy conjecture ; for neither " cæruleum" nor " beryllum" can, I think, be right ; and there certainly is a tinge of red in the necks of some of the dove species. After all, the Latin words for colours are very puzzling : for, not to mention " purpura," which is evidently applied to three different colours at least—scarlet, porphyry, and what we call purple, that is, amethyst, and possibly to many others—the chapter

of Aulus Gellius, to which you refer, has always appeared to me to create many more difficulties than it removes; and most especially that passage which you quote, "*virides equos*." I can conceive that a poet might call a horse "*viridis*," though I should think the term rather forced; but Aulus Gellius says, that Virgil gives the appellation of "*glauci*," rather than "*cærulei*," to the *virides equos*, and consequently uses *virides*, not as if it were a poetical or figurative way of describing a certain colour of horses, but as if it were the usual and most generally intelligible term. Now, what colour usual to horses could be called *viridis*, is difficult to conceive; and the more so, because there are no other Latin and English words for colours which we have such good grounds for supposing corresponding one to the other as *viridis* and *green*, on account of grass, trees, &c. &c. However, these are points which may be discussed by us, as you say, at leisure, if the system of tyranny should proceed to its maturity. Whether it will or not, I know not; but, if it should, sure I am, that to have so cultivated literature as to have laid up a store of consolation and amusement, will be, in such an event, the greatest advantage (next to a good conscience) which one man can have over another. My judgment, as well as my wishes, leads me to think, that we shall not experience such dreadful times as you suppose possible; but, if we do not, what has passed in Ireland is a proof, that it is not to the moderation of our governors that we shall be indebted for whatever portion of ease or liberty may be left us. I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXV.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, Feb. 23, 1798.

Sir,

Nothing, but your stating yourself to be in some degree at leisure now, could justify my troubling you with the long, and, perhaps, unintelligible scrawl which I send with this. I most probably have shewn much ignorance, and certainly some presumption, in seeming to dispute with you, upon points of which you know so much, and I so little: all

I can say in my defence is, that disputing is sometimes a way of learning.

I have not said any thing yet upon the question which you seem to have thought most upon—whether the *Iliad* is the work of one, or more authors? I have, for the sake of argument, admitted it; but yet, I own, I have great doubts, and even lean to an opinion different from yours. I am sure the inequality of excellence is not greater than in "*Paradise Lost*," and many other poems written confessedly by one author. I will own to you, also, that in one only of the instances of inequality which you state, I agree with you, *Atë* is detestable; but I cannot think as you do, of the death of Hector. There are parts of that book, and those closely connected with the death of Hector, which I cannot help thinking equal to any thing.

It is well for you that my paper is at an end, and that I have not the conscience to take a new sheet. Your humble servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXVI.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, March 16, 1798.

Sir,

* * * * *

I am very much concerned at your *Lucretius* meeting with so little encouragement as you say; and I feel the more, because I cannot help thinking, that part of the prejudice, which occasions so unaccountable a neglect, is imputable to the honour you have done me by the dedication of it—an honour, I assure you, that I shall always most highly value. I am, sir, yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, March 1, 1799.

Sir,

ALTHOUGH I am wholly without any resources, even of advice, and much more of power, to offer you my services upon the present occasion, yet I cannot help troubling you with a few lines, to tell you how very sincerely concerned I am at the event of your trial.

The liberty of the press I considered

am virtually destroyed by the proceedings against Johnson and Jordan; and what has happened to you I cannot but lament therefore the more, as the sufferings of a man whom I esteem, in a cause that is no more.

I have been reading your Lucretius, and have nearly finished the second volume: it appears to me to be by far the best publication of any classical author: and if it is an objection with some persons, that the great richness and variety of quotation and criticism in the notes takes off, in some degree, the attention from the text, I am not one of those, who will ever complain of an editor for giving me too much instruction and amusement. I am, with great regard, and all possible good wishes, sir, your most obedient servant, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, June 9, 1799.

Sir,

Nothing could exceed the concern I felt at the extreme severity (for such it appears to me) of the sentence pronounced against you.

I should be apprehensive, that the distance of Dorchester must add considerably to the difficulties of your situation; but should be very glad to learn from you that it is otherwise.

If any of your friends can think of any plan for you, by which some of the consequences of your confinement may be in any degree lessened, I should be very happy to be in any way assisting in it. From some words that dropped from you, when I saw you, I rather understood that you did not feel much inclination to apply to your usual studies in your present situation; otherwise it had occurred to me, that some publication, on a less expensive plan than the Lucretius, and by subscription, might be eligible, for the purpose of diverting your mind, and for serving your family; but of this you are the best judge: and all I can say is, that I shall always be happy to shew the esteem and regard with which I am, sir, your most obedient servant, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, June 10, 1799.

Sir,

WITHIN a few hours after I wrote to you yesterday a gentleman called, who informed me, that a scheme had been formed for preventing some of the ill consequences of your imprisonment, and upon a much more eligible plan than that which I suggested. Of course, you will not think any more of what I said upon that subject; only that, if you do employ yourself in writing during your confinement, my opinion is, that, in the present state of things, literature is, in every point of view, a preferable occupation to politics.

I have looked at my Roman Virgil, and find that it is printed from the Medicean MS, as I supposed. The verses regarding Helen, in the second book, are printed in a different character, and stated to be wanting in the MS. Yours ever, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXL.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, June 12, 1799.

Sir,

I RETURN you your friend's letter, which gave me great satisfaction. The sentence upon lord Thanet and Ferguson is, all things considered, most abominable; but the speech accompanying it is, if possible, worse.

I think a Lexicon in Greek and English is a work much wanted; and, if you can have patience to execute such a work, I shall consider it a great benefit to the cause of literature. I hope to hear from you, that your situation at Dorchester is not worse, at least, than you expected; and when I know you to be in a state of perfect ease of mind (which at this moment could not be expected), I will, with your leave, state to you a few observations, which I just hinted to you when I saw you, upon Porson's note to his Orestes, regarding the final *v*. I am, with great regard, sir, yours ever, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXLI.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, June 27, 1799.

Sir,

IN consequence of a letter, which lord Holland shewed me, I have written to lord Shaftesbury and to lord Ilchester, who are both very humane men, and would, I should hope, be happy to do any thing that may make your situation less uneasy. I am, sir, yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXLII.

From the same to the same.

No. 11, Sackville Street, Sept. 14, 1799.

Sir,

I ASSURE you I take very kindly your letter, and the quotation in it*. I think the question of "How far field sports are innocent amusements," is nearly connected with another, upon which, from the title of one of your intended works, I suspect you entertain opinions rather singular; for if it is lawful to kill tame animals, with whom one has a sort of acquaintance, such as *fowls, oxen, &c.*, it is still less repugnant to one's feelings to kill wild animals; but then to make a *pastime* of it—I am aware there is something to be said upon this point. On the other hand, if example is allowed to be any thing, there is nothing in which all mankind, civilised or savage, have more agreed than in making some sort of chase (for fishing is of the same nature) part of their business or amusement. However, I admit it to be a very questionable subject: at

* Mr. Wakefield, in the preceding letter (not inserted here) had expressed his notion that field sports, in the exercise of one of which Mr. F. had wounded his hand, were amusements unworthy a *man of letters*; and in confirmation of it had quoted a passage from Cicero, in which that great man says, that in his secession from public life, and his disgust with men in power, he gave himself up neither to chagrin, nor to pleasures unworthy of a man of letters: *indignis homine docto voluptatibus*. Cicero speaks here, in general, of pleasures unworthy of a learned man; but does not hint at *field sports*, or specify any sort of amusement in the passage quoted. It evinced great good temper in Mr. Fox not to shew any irritation at Mr. W.'s reflection upon him, which, to say the least of it, was apparently ill-mannered.

all events, it is a very pleasant and healthful exercise. My wound goes on, I believe, very well; and no material injury is apprehended to the hand; but the cure will be tedious, and I shall be confined in this town for more weeks than I had hoped ever to spend days here. I am much obliged to you for your inquiries, and am, sir, your most obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXLIII.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, Oct. 22, 1799.

Sir,

I BELIEVE I had best not continue the controversy about field sports; or at least, if I do, I must have recourse, I believe, to authority and precedent, rather than to argument; and content myself with rather excusing than justifying them. Cicero says, I believe, somewhere, "*Si quem nihil delectaret nisi quod cum laude et dignitate conjunctum foret, . . . huic homini ego fortasse, et pauci, Deos propitios, plebique iratos putarent.*" But this is said, I am afraid, in defence of a libertine, whose public principles, when brought to the test, proved to be as unsound as his private life was irregular. By the way, I know no speech of Cicero's more full of beautiful passages than this is (*pro M. Caelio*), nor where he is more in his element. Argumentative contention is what he by no means excels in; and he is never, I think, so happy, as when he has an opportunity of exhibiting a mixture of philosophy and pleasantry; and especially when he can interpose anecdotes, and references to the authority of the eminent characters in the history of his country. No man appears, indeed, to have had such real respect for authority as he; and therefore, when he speaks on that subject, he is always natural and in earnest; and not like those among us, who are so often declaiming about the wisdom of our ancestors, without knowing what they mean, or hardly ever citing any particulars of their conduct, or of their *dicta*.

I shewed your proposed alteration in the *Tristia* to a very good judge, who approved of it very much. I confess, myself, that I like the old reading best,

and think it more in Ovid's manner; but this, perhaps, is mere fancy. I have always been a great reader of him, and thought myself the greatest admirer he had, till you called him the first poet of antiquity, which is going even beyond me. The grand and spirited style of the *Iliad*; the true nature and simplicity of the *Odyssey*; the poetical language (far excelling that of all other poets in the world) of the *Georgics*; and the pathetic strokes in the *Æneid*, give Homer and Virgil a rank, in my judgment, clearly above all competitors; but next, after them, I should be very apt to class Ovid, to the great scandal, I believe, of all who pique themselves upon what is called purity of taste. You have somewhere compared him to Euripides, I think; and I can fancy I see a resemblance in them. This resemblance it is, I suppose, which makes one prefer Euripides to Sophocles; a preference which, if one were writing a dissertation, it would be very difficult to justify. * * *

I cannot conceive upon what principle, or indeed from what motive, they have so restricted the intercourse between you and your family. My first impulse was, to write to lord Ilchester to speak to Mr. Frampton; but, as you seem to suspect that former applications have done mischief, I shall do nothing. Did you, who are such a hater of war, ever read the lines at the beginning of the second book of Cowper's *Task*? There are few things in our language superior to them, in my judgment. He is a fine poet, and has, in a great degree, conquered my prejudices against blank verse. I am, with great regard, sir, your most obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

My hand is not yet so well as to give me the use of it, though the wound is nearly healed. The surgeon suspects there is more bone to come away. I have been here something more than a fortnight.

LETTER CXLIV.

From Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, April 5, 1801.

Sir,

I AM exceedingly concerned to hear of the loss you have sustained, as well as

of the additional suffering which your family has experienced (as of course they must), from your separation from them during so trying a calamity.

You mentioned to me, before, your notion of reading lectures upon the Classics, but not as a point upon which you had fully determined. If I can be of any use in promoting your views, I will not fail to do so: for in proportion as classical studies are an enjoyment to myself (and they are certainly a very great one), I wish them to be diffused as widely as possible. * * *

Yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXLV.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, April 13, 1801.

Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for your letter; and found immediately, from Kuster's index, the passage in question. It is in a note upon *Ἰππείδης*, v. 1365. The verses you refer to in the 5th *Æneid* are indeed delightful; indeed I think that sort of pathetic is Virgil's great excellence in the *Æneid*, and that in that way he surpasses all other poets of every age and nation, except, perhaps (and only perhaps), Shakspeare. It is on that account that I rank him so very high; for surely to excel in that style, which speaks to the heart, is the greatest of all excellence. I am glad you mention the eighth book as one of those you most admire. It has always been a peculiar favourite with me. Evander's speech upon parting with his son, is, I think, the most beautiful thing in the whole, especially the part from v. 574; and is, as far as I know, wholly unborrowed. What is more remarkable is, that it has not, I believe, been often attempted to be imitated. It is so indeed in Valerius Flaccus, lib. i. v. 323, but not, I think, very successfully.

Dum metus est, nec adhuc dolor—

goes too minutely into the philosophical reason to make, with propriety, a part of the speech. It might have done better, as an observation of the poet's, in his own person; or still better, perhaps, it would have been, to have left it to the reader. The passage in Virgil is, I think, beyond any thing.

Sin. aliquem infandum casum—
is nature itself. And then the tenderness in turning towards Pallas,

Dum te, care puer! &c.

In short, it has always appeared to me divine. On the other hand, I am sorry and surprised, that, among the capital books, you should omit the fourth. All that part of Dido's speech that follows,

Num fletu ingemuit nostro?—

is surely of the highest style of excellence; as well as the description of her last impotent efforts to retain Æneas, and of the dreariness of her situation after his departure.

I know it is the fashion to say Virgil has taken a great deal in this book from Apollonius; and it is true that he has taken some things, but not nearly so much as I had been taught to expect, before I read Apollonius. I think Medea's speech, in the fourth Argonaut, v. 356, is the part he has made most use of. There are some very peculiar *breaks* there, which Virgil has imitated certainly, and which I think are very beautiful and expressive: I mean, particularly, v. 382 in Apollonius, and v. 380 in Virgil. To be sure, the application is different, but the manner is the same: and that Virgil had the passage before him at the time, is evident from what follows:—

—Μησαιο δὲ καὶ ποτ' ἐμοιο,
στεγνυμένοις καμάτοις,

compared with

*Supplicia hausurum scopulis, et nomine Dido
Sæpe vocaturum.—*

It appears to me, upon the whole, that Ovid has taken more from Apollonius than Virgil.

I was interrupted as I was writing this on Sunday; and have been prevented since, by company, from going on.

I have dwelt the longer upon Virgil's pathetic, because his wonderful excellence in that particular has not, in my opinion, been in general sufficiently noticed. The other beauties of the eighth Æneid, such as the rites of Hercules, and the apostrophe to him, both of which Ovid has so successfully imitated in the beginning of the fourth Metamorphosis; the story of Cacus; the shield; and, above all, the description of Evan-

der's town, and of the infancy of Rome; which appears to me, in its way, to be all but equal to the account of Alcinoüs in the Odyssey, have been, I believe, pretty generally celebrated; and yet I do not recollect to have seen the eighth book classed with the second, fourth, and sixth, which are the general favourites. I am, with great regard, sir, yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXLVI.

From the same to the same.

St. Anne's Hill, April 28, 1801.

Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for your caution about Heyne's Virgil; and if I purchase it at all, I will wait for the new edition. When I was a book buyer, in my younger days, it was not in existence; and lately I have bought but few classical books, except Greek ones; and some Latin authors, of whom I had before no valuable edition. I had once a good many editions of Virgil; but having had frequent occasions to make presents, and Virgil being always a proper book for that purpose, I have now only the fine Roman one, in three volumes folio; a school Delphin; a Variorum; and Martyn's Géorgics. I am glad to find that you are not the heretic about the fourth book that I suspected you to be. Your notion, in respect to poets borrowing from each other, seems almost to come up to mine, who have often been laughed at by my friends as a systematic defender of plagiarism: indeed, I got lord Holland, when a school-boy, to write some verses in praise of it; and, in truth, it appears to me, that the greatest poets have been most guilty, if guilt there be, in these matters. Dido is surely far superior to Medea in general. Your observation on the utility of communications upon these subjects may possibly be the cause of my making many trifling ones upon them. The loss of the older Roman writers is certainly the greatest that could have happened to philology; and probably, too, on account of their own merit, is in every view a considerable one. Of the more modern writers whom you mention, I have never read any but A. Gellius. I bought Apuleius last year,

with an intention to read him, but something or other has always prevented me. I never saw one quotation from Tertullian that did not appear to me full of eloquence of the best sort; and have often thought, on that account, of buying an edition of him: but have been rather discouraged, from supposing that it might be necessary to know more than I do of the controversies in which he was engaged, to relish him properly.

With respect to your lectures, I should think that Latin would succeed better than Greek authors; but this is very uncertain. From the audience, however, which you may have upon the first, it will not be difficult to collect what probability there is of getting as good, or a better one, to the second.

It would be very good in argument, to state the inefficacy of the petitions on the slave trade, in the way you mention; and I do believe, that, in fact, the supposed inefficacy of petitions has been one of the great causes of the supine-

ness, or rather lethargy, of the country: but it is not true, that petitions, though they have been ultimately unsuccessful, have been therefore wholly inefficacious. The petitions in 1797 produced, as Mr. Pitt says (and I suspect he says truly), the negotiation at Lisle: no great good, you will say; but still they were not wholly inefficacious. And even with regard to the slave trade, I conceive the great numbers which have voted with us, sometimes amounting to a majority, have been principally owing to petitions. Even now, in this last stage of degradation, I am not sure that if the people were to petition generally (but it must be very generally), that it would be without effect.

Your attention to the unfortunate wretches you speak of* must do you the highest honour in the eyes of all men, even of tory justices; and that is saying (a bold word) *θαρσαλεον επος*. Yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

* His fellow-prisoners.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION V.

FROM THE LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD, AND
DR. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE
LETTERS OF THE EARL OF ORFORD.

LETTER I.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.

Paris, April 21, N.S. 1739.

Dear West,

You figure us in a set of pleasures, which, believe me, we do not find: cards and eating are so universal, that they absorb all variation of pleasures. The operas indeed are much frequented three times a week; but to me they would be a greater penance than eating maigre: their music resembles a gooseberry tart as much as it does harmony. We have not yet been at the Italian playhouse; scarce any one goes there. Their best amusement, and which in some parts beats ours, is the comedy; three or four of the actors excel any we have: but then to this nobody goes, if it is not one of the fashionable nights, and then they go, be the play good or bad—except on Moliere's nights, whose pieces they are quite weary of. Gray and I have been at the Avare to-night: I cannot at all commend their performance of it. Last night I was in the Place de Louis le Grand (a regular octagon, uniform, and the houses handsome, though not so large as Golden Square), to see what they reckoned one of the finest burials that ever was in France. It was the duke de Tresmes, governor of Paris and

marshal of France. It began on foot from his palace to his parish church, and from thence in coaches to the opposite end of Paris, to be interred in the church of the Celestins, where is his family vault. About a week ago we happened to see the grave digging, as we went to see the church, which is old and small, but fuller of fine ancient monuments than any except St. Denis, which we saw on the road, and excels Westminster; for the windows are all painted in mosaic, and the tombs as fresh and well preserved as if they were of yesterday. In the Celestins' church is a votive column to Francis II, which says, that it is one assurance of his being immortalized, to have had the martyr Mary Stuart for his wife. After this long digression I return to the burial, which was a most vile thing. A long procession of flambeaux and friars; no plumes, trophies, banners, led horses, scutcheons, or open chariots; nothing but

Friars,

White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.

This goodly ceremony began at nine at night, and did not finish till three this morning; for, each church they passed, they stopped for a hymn and holy water. By the bye, some of these choice monks, who watched the body while it lay in state, fell asleep one night, and let the tapers catch fire of the rich velvet mantle, lined with ermine and powered with gold flower-de-luces, which melted the lead coffin, and burnt off the feet of the

deceased before it wakened them. The French love show; but there is a meanness reigns through it all. At the house where I stood to see this procession, the room was hung with crimson damask and gold, and the windows were mended in ten or a dozen places with paper. At dinner they give you three courses; but a third of the dishes is patched up with salads, butter, puff-paste, or some such miscarriage of a dish. None but Germans wear fine clothes; but their coaches are tawdry enough for the wedding of Cupid and Psyche. You would laugh extremely at their signs; some live at the Y grec, some at Venus's toilette, and some at the sucking cat. You would not easily guess their notions of honour: I'll tell you one: it is very dishonourable for any gentleman not to be in the army, or in the king's service as they call it, and it is no dishonour to keep public gaming houses; there are at least an hundred and fifty people of the first quality in Paris who live by it. You may go into their houses at all hours of the night, and find hazard, pharaoh, &c. The men who keep the hazard-table at the duke de Gesvres' pay him twelve guineas each night for the privilege. Even the princesses of the blood are dirty enough to have shares in the banks kept at their houses. We have seen two or three of them; but they are not young, nor remarkable but for wearing their red of a deeper dye than other women, though all use it extravagantly.

The weather is still so bad, that we have not made any excursions to see Versailles and the environs, not even walked in the Thuilleries; but we have seen almost every thing else that is worth seeing in Paris, though that is very considerable. They beat us vastly in buildings, both in number and magnificence. The tombs of Richlieu and Mazarine at the Sorbonne and the College de Quatre Nations are wonderfully fine, especially the former. We have seen very little of the people themselves, who are not inclined to be propitious to strangers, especially if they do not play, and speak the language readily. If we did not remember there was such a place as England, we should know nothing of it: the French never mention it, unless it happens to be in one of their proverbs. Adieu!

Yours ever.

LETTER II.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.

From Paris, 1739.

Dear West,
I SHOULD think myself to blame not to try to divert you, when you tell me I can. From the air of your letter you seem to want amusement, that is, you want spirits. I would recommend to you certain little employments that I know of, and that belong to you, but that I imagine bodily exercise is more suitable to your complaint. If you would promise me to read them in the Temple garden, I would send you a little packet of plays and pamphlets that we have made up, and intend to dispatch to Dick's the first opportunity.—Stand by, clear the way, make room for the pompous appearance of Versailles le grand!—But no; it fell so short of my idea of it, mine, that I have resigned to Gray the office of writing its panegyric. He likes it. They say I am to like it better next Sunday; when the sun is to shine, the king is to be fine, the water-works are to play, and the new knights of the Holy Ghost are to be installed! Ever since Wednesday, the day we were there, we have done nothing but dispute about it. They say, we did not see it to advantage, that we ran through the apartments, saw the garden *en passant*, and sllobbered over Trianon. I say, we saw nothing. However, we had time to see that the great front is a lumber of littlenesses, composed of black brick, stuck full of bad old busts, and fringed with gold rails. The rooms are all small, except the great gallery, which is noble, but totally wainscoted with looking glass. The garden is littered with statues and fountains, each of which has its tutelary deity. In particular, the elementary god of fire solaces himself in one. In another, Enceladus, in lieu of a mountain, is overwhelmed with many waters. There are avenues of water-pots, who disport themselves much in squirting up cascadelins. In short, 'tis a garden for a great child. Such was Louis Quatorze, who is here seen in his proper colours, where he commanded in person, unassisted by his armies and generals, and left to the pursuit of his own puerile ideas of glory.

We saw last week a place of another kind, and which has more the air of what it would be, than any thing I have yet met with : it was the convent of the Chartreux. All the conveniences, or rather (if there was such a word) all the *adaptments* are assembled here, that melancholy, meditation, selfish devotion, and despair would require. But yet 'tis pleasing. Soften the terms, and mel- low the uncouth horror that reigns here, but a little, and 'tis a charming solitude. It stands on a large space of ground, is old and irregular. The chapel is gloomy : behind it, through some dark passages, you pass into a large obscure hall, which looks like a combination-chamber for some hellish council. The large cloister surrounds their burying-ground. The cloisters are very narrow, and very long, and let in to the cells, which are built like little huts detached from each other. We were carried into one, where lived a middle-aged man, not long initiated into the order. He was extremely civil, and called himself Dom Victor. We have promised to visit him often. Their habit is all white ; but besides this, he was infinitely clean in his person ; and his apartment and garden, which he keeps and cultivates without any assistance, was neat to a degree. He has four little rooms, furnished in the prettiest manner, and hung with good prints. One of them is a library, and another a gallery. He has several canary birds disposed in a pretty manner in breeding cages. In his garden was a bed of good tulips in bloom, flowers and fruit trees, and all neatly kept. They are permitted at certain hours to talk to strangers, but never to one another, or to go out of their convent. But what we chiefly went to see was the small cloister, with the history of St. Bruno, their founder, painted by Le Seur. It consists of twenty-two pictures, the figures a good deal less than life. But sure they are amazing ! I don't know what Raphael may be in Rome, but these pictures excel all I have seen in Paris and England. The figure of the dead man, who spoke at his burial, contains all the strongest and horriddest ideas of ghastliness, hypocrisy discovered, and the height of damnation ; pain and cursing. A Benedictine monk, who was there at the same time, said to me of this picture : *C'est une fable, mais on la croyoit autrefois*. Another, who shewed me

relics in one of their churches, expressed as much ridicule for them. The pictures I have been speaking of are ill preserved, and some of the finest heads defaced, which was done at first by a rival of Le Seur's. Adieu, dear West, take care of your health ; and some time or other we will talk over all these things with more pleasure than I have had in seeing them.

Yours ever.

LETTER III.

From the same to the same.

From a Hamlet among the Mountains of Savoy, Sept. 28, 1739, N. S.

PRECIPICES, mountains, torrents, wolves, rumblings, Salvator Rosa—the pomp of our park and the meekness of our palace ! Here we are, the lonely lords of glorious desolate prospects. I have kept a sort of resolution which I made, of not writing to you as long as I staid in France : I am now a quarter of an hour out of it, and write to you. Mind, 'tis three months since we heard from you. I begin this letter among the clouds ; where I shall finish, my neighbour heaven probably knows ; 'tis an odd wish in a mortal letter, to hope not to finish it on this side the atmosphere. You will have a billet tumble to you from the stars when you least think of it : and that I should write it too ! Lord, how potent that sounds ! But I am to undergo many transmigrations before I come to “ yours ever.” Yesterday I was a shepherd of Dauphiné ; to-day an Alpine savage ; to-morrow a Carthusian monk ; and Friday a Swiss Calvinist. I have one quality which I find remains with me in all worlds and in all æthers ; I brought it with me from your world, and am admired for it in this ; 'tis my esteem for you ; this is a common thought among you, and you will laugh at it, but it is new here ; as new to remember one's friends in the world one has left, as for you to remember those you have lost.

Aix in Savoy, Sept. 30th.

We are this minute come in here, and here's an awkward abbé this minute come in to us. I asked him if he would sit down. *Oui, oui, oui*. He has ordered us a radish soup for supper, and has brought a chess-board to play with Mr. Conway. I have left 'em in the act, and

am set down to write to you. Did you ever see any thing like the prospect we saw yesterday? I never did. We rode three leagues to see the Grande Chartreuse; expected bad roads, and the finest convent in the kingdom. We were disappointed pro and con. The building is large and plain, and has nothing remarkable but its primitive simplicity: they entertained us in the neatest manner, with eggs, pickled salmon, dried fish, conserves, cheese, butter, grapes, and figs, and pressed us mightily to lie there. We tumbled into the hands of a lay brother, who, unluckily having the charge of the meal and bran, showed us little besides. They desired us to set down our names in the list of strangers, where, among others, we found two mottos of our countrymen, for whose stupidity and brutality we blushed. The first was of sir J *** D ***, who had wrote down the first stanza of *Justum & tenacem*, altering the last line to *Mente quatit Carthusiana*. The second was of one D **, *Cælum ipsum petimus stultitiâ; & hic ventri indico bellum*. The Goth! But the road, West, the road! winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded with others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines or lost in clouds! Below, a torrent breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rocks! Sheets of cascades forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hasting into the roughened river at the bottom! Now and then an old foot-bridge, with a broken rail, a leaning cross, a cottage, or the ruin of an hermitage! This sounds too bombast and too romantic to one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has. If I could send you my letter post between two lovely tempests that echoed each other's wrath, you might have some idea of this noble roaring scene, as you were reading it. Almost on the summit, upon a fine verdure, but without any prospect, stands the Chartreuse. We staid there two hours, rode back through this charming picture, wished for a painter, wished to be poets! Need I tell you we wished for you? Good night!

Yours ever.

LETTER IV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.

Florence, February 27, 1740, N. S.

WELL, West, I have found a little unmasked moment to write to you; but for this week past I have been so muffled up in my domino, that I have not had the command of my elbows. But what have you been doing all the mornings? Could you not write then? No, then I was masqued too; I have done nothing but slip out of my domino into bed, and out of bed into my domino. The end of the Carnival is frantic, bacchanalian; all the morn one makes parties in masque to the shops and coffee-houses, and all the evening to the operas and balls. *Then I have danced, good gods, how I have danced!* The Italians are fond to a degree of our country dances: *Cold and raw* they only know by the tune; *Blowzy-bella* is almost Italian, and *Buttered peas* is *Pizelli al buro*. There are but three days more; but the two last are to have balls all the morning at the fine unfinished palace of the Strozzi; and the Tuesday night a masquerade after supper; they sup first, to eat *gras*, and not encroach upon Ash-wednesday. What makes masquerading more agreeable here than in England, is the great deference that is showed to the disguised. Here they do not catch at those little dirty opportunities of saying any ill-natured thing they know of you, do not abuse you because they may, or talk indecently to a woman of quality. I found the other day, by a play of Etheridge's, that we have had a sort of Carnival even since the Reformation; 'tis in *She would if she could*, they talk of going a-mumming in Shrove-tide. After talking so much of diversions, I fear you will attribute to them the fondness I own I contract for Florence; but it has so many other charms, that I shall not want excuses for my taste. The freedom of the Carnival has given me opportunities to make several acquaintances; and if I have not found them refined, learned, polished, like some other cities, yet they are civil, good-natured, and fond of the English. Their little partiality for themselves, opposed to the violent vanity of the French, makes them very amiable in my eyes. I can give you a comical instance of their great prejudice about nobility; it happened

yesterday. While we were at dinner at Mr. Mann's, word was brought by his secretary, that a cavalier demanded audience of him upon an affair of honour. Gray and I flew behind the curtain of the door. An elderly gentleman, whose attire was not certainly correspondent to the greatness of his birth, entered, and informed the British minister that one Martin, an English painter, had left a challenge for him at his house, for having said Martin was no gentleman. He would by no means have spoke of the duel before the transaction of it, but that his honour, his blood, his &c. would never permit him to fight with one who was no cavalier; which was what he came to inquire of his excellency. We laughed loud laughs, but unheard: his fright or his nobility had closed his ears. But mark the sequel; the instant he was gone, my very English curiosity hurried me out of the gate St. Gallo; 'twas the place and hour appointed. We had not been driving about above ten minutes, but out popped a little figure, pale but cross, with beard unshaved and hair uncombed, a slouched hat, and a considerable red cloak, in which was wrapped, under his arm, the fatal sword that was to revenge the highly injured Mr. Martin, painter and defendant. I darted my head out of the coach, just ready to say "Your servant, Mr. Martin," and talk about the architecture of the triumphal arch that was building there; but he would not know me, and walked off. We left him to wait for an hour, to grow very cold and very valiant the more it grew past the hour of appointment. We were figuring all the poor creature's huddle of thoughts, and confused hopes of victory or fame, of his unfinished pictures, or his situation upon bouncing into the next world. You will think us strange creatures; but 'twas a pleasant sight, as we knew the poor painter was safe. I have thought of it since, and am inclined to believe that nothing but two English could have been capable of such a jaunt. I remember, 'twas reported in London that the plague was at a house in the city, and all the town went to see it. Adieu!

Yours ever.

LETTER V.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole and Mr. Gray
to Richard West, Esq.*

Rome, April 16, 1740, N. S.

I'LL tell you, West, because one is amongst new things, you think one can always write new things. When I first came abroad, every thing struck me, and I wrote its history; but now I am grown so used to be surprised, that I don't perceive any flutter in myself when I meet with any novelties; curiosity and astonishment wear off, and the next thing is, to fancy that other people know as much of places as one's self; or, at least, one does not remember that they do not. It appears to me as odd to write to you of St. Peter's as it would do to you to write of Westminster Abbey. Besides, as one looks at churches, &c. with a book of travels in one's hand, and sees every thing particularized there, it would appear transcribing to write upon the same subjects. I know you will hate me for this declaration; I remember how ill I used to take it when any body served me so that was travelling. Well, I will tell you something, if you will love me: you have seen prints of the ruins of the temple of Minerva Medica; you shall only hear its situation, and then figure what a villa might be laid out there. 'Tis in the middle of a garden: at a little distance are two subterraneous grottos, which were the burial-places of the liberti of Augustus. There are all the niches and covers of the urns with the inscriptions remaining; and in one, very considerable remains of an ancient stucco ceiling with paintings in grotesque. Some of the walks would terminate upon the Castellum Aquæ Martiæ, St. John Lateran, and St. Maria Maggiore, besides other churches; the walls of the garden would be two aqueducts, and the entrance through one of the old gates of Rome. This glorious spot is neglected, and only serves for a small vineyard and kitchen-garden.

I am very glad that I see Rome while it yet exists; before a great number of years are elapsed, I question whether it will be worth seeing. Between the ignorance and poverty of the present Romans, every thing is neglected and falling to decay; the villas are entirely out of repair, and the palaces so ill kept,

that half the pictures are spoiled by damp. At the villa Ludovisi is a large oracular head of red marble, colossal, and with vast foramina for the eyes and mouth:—the man that shewed the palace said it was *un ritratto della famiglia*. The cardinal Corsini has so thoroughly pushed on the misery of Rome, by impoverishing it, that there is no money but paper to be seen. He is reckoned to have amassed three millions of crowns. You may judge of the affluence the nobility live in, when I assure you, that what the chief princes allow for their own eating is a testoon a day, eighteen pence; there are some extend their expense to five pauls, or half a crown: cardinal Albani is called extravagant for laying out ten pauls for his dinner and supper. You may imagine they never have any entertainments: so far from it, they never have any company. The princesses and duchesses, particularly, lead the dimmallest of lives. Being the posterity of popes, though of worse families than the ancient nobility, they expect greater respect than my ladies the countesses and marquises will pay them; consequently they consort not, but mope in a vast palace, with two miserable tapers, and two or three monsignori, whom they are forced to court and humour, that they may not be entirely deserted. Sundays they do issue forth in a vast unwieldy coach to the Corso.

In short, child, after sunset one passes one's time here very ill; and if I did not wish for you in the mornings, it would be no compliment to tell you that I do in the evening. Lord! how many English I could change for you, and yet buy you wondrous cheap! And then French and Germans I could fling into the bargain by dozens. Nations swarm here. You will have a great fat French cardinal, garnished with thirty abbés, roll into the area of St. Peter's, gape, turn short, and talk of the chapel of Versailles. I heard one of them say, t'other day, he had been at the *Capitale*. One asked, of course, how he liked it—*Ah! il y a assez de belles choses*.

Tell Asheton I have received his letter, and will write next post; but I am in a violent hurry, and have no more time; so Gray finishes this delicately—

Nor so delicate; nor indeed would his conscience suffer him to write to you,

till he received *de vos nouvelles*, if he had not the tail of another person's letter to use, by way of evasion. I shan't describe, as being in the only place in the world that deserves it; which may seem an odd reason—but they say as how it's fulsome, and every body does it (and I suppose every body says the same thing); else I should tell you a vast deal about the Coliseum, and the Conclave, and the Capitol, and these matters. *A propos du Colisée*, if you don't know what it is, the prince Borghese will be very capable of giving you some account of it, who told an Englishman, that asked what it was built for—"They say 'twas for Christians to fight with tigers in." We are just come from adoring a great piece of the true cross, St. Longinus's spear, and St. Veronica's handkerchief; all which have been this evening exposed to view in St. Peter's. In the same place, and on the same occasion, last night, Walpole saw a poor creature, naked to the waist, discipline himself with a scourge, filled with iron prickles, till he had made himself a raw doublet, that he took for red satin torn, and showing the skin through. I should tell you, that he fainted away three times at the sight, and I twice and a half at the repetition of it. All this is performed by the light of a vast fiery cross, composed of hundreds of little crystal lamps, which appears through the great altar, under the grand tribuna, as if hanging by itself in the air. All the confraternities of the city resort thither in solemn procession, habited in linen frocks, girt with a cord, and their heads covered with a cowl all over, that has only two holes before to see through. Some of these are all black, others parti-coloured and white: and with these masqueraders that vast church is filled, who are seen thumping their breast, and kissing the pavement with extreme devotion. But methinks I am describing:—'tis an ill habit; but this, like every thing else, will wear off. We have sent you our compliments by a friend of yours, and correspondent in a corner, who seems a very agreeable man, one Mr. Williams: I am sorry he staid so little a while in Rome. I forget Porto Bello all this while; pray let us know where it is, and whether you or Asheton had any hand in the taking of it. Duty to the admiral. Adieu! Ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER VI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to R. West, Esq.

Naples, June 14, 1740, N. S.

Dear West,

ONE hates writing descriptions that are to be found in every book of travels; but we have seen something to-day that I am sure you never read of, and perhaps never heard of. Have you ever heard of the subterraneous town? a whole Roman town, with all its edifices, remaining under ground? Don't fancy the inhabitants buried it there to save it from the Goths: they were buried with it themselves; which is a caution we are not told they ever took. You remember, in Titus's time, there were several cities destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius, attended with an earthquake. Well, this was one of them, not very considerable, and then called Herculaneum. Above it has since been built Portici, about three miles from Naples, where the king has a villa. This under-ground city is, perhaps, one of the noblest curiosities that ever has been discovered. It was found out by chance, about a year and a half ago. They began digging, they found statues; they dug further, they found more. Since that they have made a very considerable progress, and find continually. You may walk the compass of a mile; but, by the misfortune of the modern town being overhead, they are obliged to proceed with great caution, lest they destroy both one and t'other. By this occasion the path is very narrow, just wide enough and high enough for one man to walk upright. They have hollowed as they found it easiest to work, and have carried their streets not exactly where were the ancient ones, but sometimes before houses, sometimes through them. You would imagine that all the fabrics were crushed together; on the contrary, except some columns, they have found all the edifices standing upright, in their proper situation. There is one inside of a temple quite perfect, with the middle arch, two columns, and two pilasters. It is built of brick, plastered over, and painted with architecture: almost all the insides of the houses are in the same manner; and, what is very particular, the general ground of all the painting is red. Besides this temple, they make out very plainly an amphitheatre: the stairs, of white mar-

ble, and the seats are very perfect; the inside was painted in the same colour with the private houses, and great part cased with white marble. They have found, among other things, some fine statues, some human bones, some rice, medals, and a few paintings, extremely fine. These latter are preferred to all the ancient paintings that have ever been discovered. We have not seen them yet, as they are kept in the king's apartment, whither all these curiosities are transplanted; and 'tis difficult to see them—but we shall. I forgot to tell you, that in several places the beams of the houses remain, but burnt to charcoal; so little damaged that they retain visibly the grain of the wood, but, upon touching, crumble to ashes. What is remarkable, there are no other marks or appearances of fire, but what are visible on these beams.

There might certainly be collected great light from this reservoir of antiquities, if a man of learning had the inspection of it; if he directed the working, and would make a journal of the discoveries. But I believe there is no judicious choice made of directors. There is nothing of the kind known in the world; I mean a Roman city entire of that age, and that has not been corrupted with modern repairs*. Besides scrutinizing this very carefully, I should be inclined to search for the remains of the other towns, that were partners with this in the general ruin. 'Tis certainly an advantage to the learned world, that this has been laid up so long. Most of the discoveries in Rome were made in a barbarous age, where they only ransacked the ruins in quest of treasure, and had no regard to the form and being of the building; or to any circumstances that might give light into its use and history. I shall finish this long account with a passage which Gray has observed in Statius, and which directly pictures out this latent city:—

*Hæc ego Chalcidicis ad te, Marcellæ, sonabam
Littoribus, fractas ubi Vestius egerit iras,
Æmula Trinacriis volvens incendia flammis.
Mira fides! credetne virum ventura propago,
Cum segetes iterum, cum jam hæc deserta virebunt,
Infra urbes populosque premi?*

SYLV. lib. iv. epist. 4.

Adieu, my dear West! and believe me yours ever.

* Pompeia was not then discovered.

LETTER VII.

*The Honourable Horace Walpole to John Chute, Esq.**

Stowe, Aug. 4, 1753.

My dear sir,

You would deserve to be scolded, if you had not lost almost as much pleasure as you have disappointed me of †. Whether George Montagu will be so content with your commuting punishments, I don't know: I should think not: he *cried and roared all night* ‡ when I delivered your excuse. He is extremely well housed, after having roamed like a Tartar about the country, with his whole personal estate at his heels. There is an extensive view, which is called pretty: but Northamptonshire is no county to please me. What entertained me was, that he, who in London was grown an absolute recluse, is over head and ears in neighbours, and as popular as if he intended to stand for the county, instead of having given up the town. The very first morning after my arrival, as we were getting into the chaise to go to Wroxton, they notified a sir Harry Danvers, a young squire, booted and spurred, and buckskin-breeched. "Will you drink any chocolate?"—"No; a little wine and water, if you please." I suspected nothing but that he had rode till he was dry. "Nicold, get some wine and water." He desired the water might be warm—I began to stare—Montagu understood the dialect, and ordered a negus. I had great difficulty to keep my countenance, and still more when I saw the baronet finish a very large jug indeed. To be sure, he wondered as much at me, who did not finish a jug; and I could not help reflecting, that living always in the world makes one as unfit for living out of it, as always living out of it does for living in it. Knightley, the knight of the shire, has been entertaining all the parishes round with a turtle feast, which, so far from succeeding, has almost made him suspected for a Jew, as the country parsons have not yet learned to wade into green fat.

The roads are very bad to Greatworth, and such numbers of gates, that if one

loved punning, one should call it the *Gate-house*. The proprietor had a wonderful invention: the chimnies, which are of stone, have niches and benches in them, where the man used to sit and smoke. I had twenty disasters, according to custom; lost my way, and had my French boy almost killed by a fall with his horse: but I have been much pleased. When I was at Park Place I went to see sir H. Englefield's*, which Mr. C**** and lady M*** prefer, but I think very undeservedly, to Mr. Southcote's. It is not above a quarter as extensive, and wants the river. There is a pretty view of Reading seen under a rude arch, and the water is well disposed. The buildings are very insignificant, and the house far from good. The town of Henley has been extremely disturbed with an engagement between the ghosts of miss Blandy and her father, which continued so violent, that some bold persons, to prevent farther bloodshed, broke in, and found it was two jackasses which had got into the kitchen.

I felt strangely tempted to stay at Oxford, and survey it at my leisure; but, as I was alone, I had not courage. I passed by sir James Dashwood's †, a vast new house, situated so high that it seems to stand for the county, as well as himself. I did look over lord Jersey's ‡, which was built for a hunting-box, and is still little better. But now I am going to tell you how delightful a day I passed at Wroxton. Lord Guildford has made George Montagu so absolutely viceroy over it, that we saw it more agreeable than you can conceive; roamed over the whole house, found every door open, saw not a creature, had an extreme good dinner, wine, fruit, coffee and tea, in the library, were served by fairies, tumbled over the books, said one or two talismanic words and the cascade played, and went home loaded with pine-apples and flowers. You will take me for monsieur de Coulanges, I describe eatables so feelingly; but the manner in which we were served made the whole delicious. The house was built by a lord Downe, in the reign of James the First; and, though there is a fine hall and a vast dining-room below, and as large a drawing-room above, it is neither good nor agreeable: one end of the front was

* Of the Vine, in Hampshire.

† In not accompanying Mr. Walpole on a visit to Mr. George Montagu, at Greatworth.

‡ A phrase of Mr. Montagu's.

* White Knights. † At High Wycombe.

‡ Middleton.

never finished, and might have a good apartment. The library is added by this lord, and is a pleasant chamber. Except loads of old portraits, there is no tolerable furniture. A whole length of the first earl of Downe is in the bath robes, and has a coif under the hat and feather. There is a charming picture of prince Henry, about twelve years old, drawing his sword to kill a stag, with a lord Harrington; a good portrait of sir Owen Hopton, 1590; your *pious* grandmother, my lady Dacre, which I think like you; some good Cornelius Johnsons; a lord North, by Riley, good; and an extreme fine portrait by him of the lord keeper: I have never seen but few of the hand, but most of them have been equal to Lely and the best of sir Godfrey. There is, too, a curious portrait of sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity college, Oxford, said to be by Holbein. The chapel is new, but in a pretty Gothic taste, with a very long window of painted glass, very tolerable. The frieze is pendent, just in the manner I propose for the eating-room at Strawberry Hill. Except one scene, which is indeed noble, I cannot much commend the without doors. This scene consists of a beautiful lake, entirely shut in with wood: the head falls into a fine cascade, and that into a serpentine river, over which is a little Gothic seat like a round temple, lifted up by a shaggy mount. On an eminence in the park is an obelisk, erected to the honour and at the expense of "*optimus et munificentissimus*," the late prince of Wales, "*in loci amantitatem et memoriam adventus ejus*." There are several paltry Chinese buildings and bridges, which have the merit or demerit of being the progenitors of a very numerous race all over the kingdom: at least they were of the very first. In the church is a beautiful tomb of an earl and countess of Downe, and the tower is in a good plain Gothic style, and was once, they tell you, still more beautiful; but Mr. Miller, who designed it, unluckily once in his life happened to think rather of beauty than of the water tables, and so it fell down the first winter.

On Wednesday morning we went to see a sweet little chapel at Steane, built in 1620 by sir T. Crewe, speaker in the time of the first James and Charles. Here are the remains of the mansion

house, but quite in ruins: the chapel is kept up by my lady Arran, the last of the race. There are seven or eight monuments. On one is this epitaph, which I thought pretty enough:—

*Conjux casta, parens felix, matrona pudica,
Sara viro, mundo Martha, Maria Deo.*

On another is the most affected inscription I ever saw, written by two brothers on their sister; they say, *This agreeable mortal translated her into immortality such a day*: but I could not help laughing at one quaint expression, to which time has given a droll sense; *She was a constant lover of the best*.

I have been here these two days, extremely amused and charmed indeed. Wherever you stand, you see an Alban landscape. Half as many buildings I believe would be too many, but such a profusion gives inexpressible richness. You may imagine I have some private reflections entertaining enough, not very communicable to the company: the temple of friendship, in which, among twenty memorandums of quarrels, is the bust of Mr. Pitt: Mr. James Grenville is now in the house, whom his uncle disinherited for his attachment to that very Pylades, Mr. Pitt. He broke with Mr. Pope, who is deified in the Elysian fields, before the inscription for his head was finished. That of sir J. Barnard, which was bespoke by the name of a bust of my lord mayor, was, by a mistake of the sculptor, done for alderman Perry. The statue of the king, and that "*honori, laudi, virtuti divæ Carolinæ*," make one smile, when one sees the ceiling where Britannia rejects and hides the reign of king ****. But I have no patience at building and planting a satire! Such is the temple of modern virtue in ruins! The Grecian temple is glorious: this I openly worship: in the heretical corner of my heart I adore the Gothic building, which, by some unusual inspiration, Gibbs has made pure, and beautiful, and venerable. The style has a propensity to the Venetian or mosque Gothic, and the great column near it makes the whole put one in mind of the place of St. Mark. The windows are throughout consecrated with painted glass; most of it from the priory at Warwick, a present from that foolish ****, who quarrelled with me (because his father was a gardener) for asking him if lord Brook

had planted much.—A-propos to painted glass. I forgot to tell you of a sweet house, which Mr. Montagu carried me to see, belonging to a Mr. Holman, a Catholic, and called Warkworth. The situation is pretty, the front charming, composed of two round and two square towers. The court within is incomplete on one side; but above stairs is a vast gallery, with four bow windows and twelve other large ones, all filled with the arms of the old peers of England, with all their quarterings entire. You don't deserve, after deserting me, that I should tempt you to such a sight; but this alone is worth while to carry you to Greatworth.

Adieu, my dear sir! I return to Strawberry to-morrow, and forgive you enough not to deprive myself of the satisfaction of seeing you there, whenever you have nothing else to do.

Yours ever.

LETTER VIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard Bentley, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, September 18, 1755.

My dear sir,

AFTER an expectation of six weeks, I have received a letter from you, dated August 23d. Indeed I did not impute any neglect to you; I knew it arose from the war: but Mr. *** tells me the packets will now be more regular. Mr. *** tells me!—What, has he been in town, or at Strawberry?—No; but I have been at Southampton; I was at the Vine; and on the arrival of a few fine days, the first we have had this summer, after a deluge, Mr. Chute persuaded me to take a jaunt to Winchester and Netley Abbey, with the latter of which he is very justly enchanted.

I was disappointed in Winchester: it is a paltry town, and small. King Charles the Second's house is the worst thing I ever saw of sir Christopher Wren, a mixture of a town hall and an hospital, not to mention the bad choice of the situation in such a country; it is all *ups* that should be *downs*. I talk to you as supposing that you never have been at Winchester, though I suspect you have, for the entrance of the cathedral is the very idea of that of Mabland. I like the

smugness of the cathedral, and the profusion of the most beautiful Gothic tombs. That of cardinal Beaufort is in a style more free, and of more taste, than any thing I have seen of the kind. His figure confirms me in my opinion that I have struck out the true history of the picture that I bought of Robinson, and which I take for the marriage of Henry VI. Besides the monuments of the Saxon kings, of Lucius, William Rufus, his brother, &c., there are those of six such great or considerable men as Beaufort, William of Wickham, him of Wainfleet, the bishops Fox and Gardiner, and my lord treasurer Portland. How much power and ambition under half a dozen stones! I own, I grow to look on tombs as lasting mansions, instead of observing them for curious pieces of architecture!—Going into Southampton, I passed Bevis Mount, where my lord Peterborough

Hung his trophies o'er his garden gate;

but general Mordaunt was there, and we could not see it. We walked long by moonlight on the terrass along the beach—guess, if we talked of and wished for you! The town is crowded; sea-baths are established there too. But how shall I describe Netley to you? I can only by telling you, that it is the spot in the world for which Mr. Chute and I wish. The ruins are vast, and retain fragments of beautiful fretted roofs, pendant in the air, with all variety of Gothic patterns of windows, wrapped round and round with ivy: many trees are sprouted up amongst the walls, and only want to be increased with cypresses! A hill rises above the abbey, encircled with wood: the fort, in which we would build a tower for habitation, remains, with two small platforms. This little castle is buried from the abbey in a wood, in the very centre, on the edge of the hill: on each side breaks in the view of the Southampton sea, deep blue, glistening with silver and vessels; on one side terminated by Southampton, on the other by Calshot castle; and the Isle of Wight rising above the opposite hills. In short, they are not the ruins of Netley, but of Paradise. Oh! the purple abbots, what a spot had they chosen to slumber in! The scene is so beautifully tranquil, yet so lively, that they seem only to have *retired into the world*.

I know nothing of the war, but that

we catch little French ships like crawfish. They have taken one of ours, with governor *** going to ***. He is a very worthy young man, but so stiffened with sir ***'s old fustian, that I am persuaded he is at this minute in the citadel of Nantes, comparing himself to Regulus.

Gray has lately been here. He has begun an ode, which, if he finishes equally, will, I think, inspirit all your drawing again. It is founded on an old tradition of Edward I. putting to death the Welsh bards. Nothing but you, or Salvator Rosa, and Nicolo Poussin, can paint up to the expressive horror and dignity of it. Don't think I mean to flatter you; all I would say is, that now the two latter are dead, you must of necessity be Gray's painter. In order to keep your talent alive, I shall next week send you flake white, brushes, oil, and the enclosed directions from Mr. Müntz, who is still at the Vine, and whom, for want of you, we labour hard to form. I shall put up in the parcel two or three prints of my eagle, which, as you never would draw it, is very moderately performed; and yet the drawing was much better than the engraving. I shall send you too a trifling snuff-box, only as a sample of the new manufacture at Battersea, which is done with copper-plates. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, where I cannot say any works go on in proportion to my impatience. I have left him an *inventory* of all I want to have done there; but I believe it may be bound up with the century of projects of that foolish marquis of Worcester, who printed a catalogue of titles of things, which he gave no directions to execute, nor I believe could. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

Wentworth Castle, August.

I ALWAYS dedicate my travels to you. My present expedition has been very amusing; sights are thick sown in the counties of York and Nottingham: the former is more historic, and the great lords live at a prouder distance: in Nottinghamshire there is a very heptarchy of little kingdoms elbowing one another, and the barons of them want

nothing but small armies to make inroads into one another's parks, murder deer, and massacre park-keepers. But to come to particulars. The great road, as far as Stamford, is superb; in any other country it would furnish medals, and immortalize any drowsy monarch in whose reign it was executed. It is continued much farther, but is more rumbling. I did not stop at Hatfield and Burleigh to see the palaces of my great-uncle ministers, having seen them before. Bugden Palace surprises one prettily in a little village; and the remains of Newark Castle, seated pleasantly, began to open a vein of historic memory. I had only transient and distant views of lord Tyrconnel's at Belton, and of Belvoir. The borders of Huntingdonshire have churches instead of milestones; but the richness and extent of Yorkshire quite charmed me. Oh! what quarries for working in Gothic! This place is one of the very few that I really like; the situation, woods, views, and the improvements are perfect in their kinds: nobody has a truer taste than lord Strafford. The house is a pompous front, screening an old house: it was built by the last lord, on a design of the Prussian architect Bott, who is mentioned in the King's Memoires de Brandenburg, and is not ugly. The one pair of stairs is entirely engrossed by a gallery of 180 feet, on the plan of that in the Colonna Palace at Rome. It has nothing but four modern statues, and some bad portraits; but, on my proposal, is going to have books at each end. The hall is pretty, but low; the drawing-room handsome: there wants a good eating-room and staircase; but I have formed a design for both, and I believe they will be executed. That my plans should be obeyed when yours are not! I shall bring you a ground plot for a Gothic building, which I have proposed that you should draw for a little wood, but in the manner of an ancient market-cross. Without doors all is pleasing: there is a beautiful (artificial) river, with a fine semicircular wood overlooking it, and the temple of Tivoli placed happily on a rising towards the end. There are obelisks, columns, and other buildings, and, above all, a handsome castle, in the true style, on a rude mountain, with a court and towers; in the castle yard a statue of the late lord, who

built it. Without the park is a lake on each side, buried in noble woods. Now contrast all this, and you may have some idea of lord Rockingham's. Imagine a most extensive and most beautiful modern front erected before the great lord Strafford's old house, and this front almost blocked up with hills, and every thing unfinished round it, nay, within it. The great apartment, which is magnificent, is untouched; the chimney-pieces lie in boxes unopened. The park is traversed by a common road, between two high hedges—not from necessity—oh! no; this lord loves nothing but horses, and the enclosures for them take place of every thing. The bowling-green behind the house contains no less than four obelisks, and looks like a Brobdingnag nine-pin alley: on a hill near, you would think you saw the York Buildings water-works invited into the country. There are temples in corn fields; and, in the little wood, a window frame mounted on a bunch of laurel, and intended for an hermitage. In the inhabited part of the house the chimney-pieces are like tombs; and on that in the library is the figure of this lord's grandfather, in a nightgown of plaster and gold. Amidst all this litter and bad taste, I adored the fine Vandyc of lord Strafford and his secretary, and could not help reverencing his bed-chamber. With all his faults and arbitrary behaviour, one must worship his spirit and eloquence: where one esteems but a single royalist, one need not fear being too partial. When I visited his tomb in the church (which is remarkably neat and pretty, and enriched with monuments), I was provoked to find a little mural cabinet, with his figure, three feet high, kneeling. Instead of a stern bust (and his head would furnish a nobler than Bernini's Brutus), one is peevish to see a plaything that might have been bought at Chenevix's. There is a tender inscription to the second lord Strafford's wife, written by himself; but his genius was fitter to coo over his wife's memory, than to sacrifice to his father's.

Well! you have had enough of magnificence; you shall repose in a desert.—Old Wortley Montague lives on the very spot where the dragon of Wantley did—only I believe the latter was much better lodged. You never saw such a wretched hovel, lean, unpainted, and half its nakedness barely shaded with harateen,

stretched till it cracks. Here the miser hoards health and money, his only two objects: he has chronicles in behalf of the air, and batten on Tokay, his single indulgence, as he has heard it is particularly salutary. But the savageness of the scene would charm your Alpine taste: it is tumbled with fragments of mountains, that look ready laid for building the world. One scrambles over a huge terrass, on which mountain ashes and various trees spring out of the very rocks; and at the brow is the den, but not spacious enough for such an inmate. However, I am persuaded it furnished Pope with this line, so exactly it answers to the picture:—

On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes.

I wanted to ask if Pope had not visited lady Mary Wortley here, during their intimacy; but could one put that question to *Avidien* himself. There remains an ancient odd inscription here, which has such a whimsical mixture of devotion and romantieness, that I must transcribe it:—

“Preye for the soul of sir Thomas Wortley, knight of the body to the kings Edward IV., Richard III., Henry VII., Henry VIII., whose faults God pardon. He caused a lodge to be built on this crag in the midst of Wharnclyff (the old orthography) to hear the harts bell, in the year of our Lord 1510.” It was a chase, and what he meant to hear was the noise of the stags.

During my residence here I have made two little excursions; and I assure you it requires resolution; the roads are insufferable. They mend them—I should call it spoil them—with large pieces of stone. At Pomfret I saw the remains of that memorable castle “where Rivers, Vaughan, and Grey lay shorter by the head;” and on which Gray says—

And thou, proud boy, from Pomfret's walls
shalt send
A groan, and envy oft thy happy grandsire's
end!

The ruins are vanishing, but well situated; there is a large demolished church, and a pretty market-house. We crossed a Gothic bridge, of eight arches, at Ferrybridge, where there is a pretty view, and went to a large old house of lord Huntingdon's at Ledstone, which has nothing remarkable but a lofty terrace, a whole length portrait of his grandfather

in tapestry, and the having belonged to the great lord Strafford. We saw that monument of part of poor sir John ***'s extravagance, his house and garden, which he left orders to make, without once looking at either plan. The house is a bastard Gothic, but of not near the extent I had heard. We lay at Leeds, a dingy large town; and through very bad black roads (for the whole country is a colliery, or a quarry) we went to Kirkstall Abbey, where are vast Saxon ruins, in a most picturesque situation, on the banks of a river that falls in a cascade among rich meadows, hills, and woods. It belongs to lord Cardigan; his father pulled down a large house here, lest it should interfere with the family seat, Deane. We returned through Wakefield, where is a pretty Gothic chapel on a bridge, erected by Edward IV, in memory of his father, who lived at Sandal Castle just by, and perished in the battle here. There is scarce any thing of the castle extant, but it commanded a rich prospect.

By permission from their graces of Norfolk, who are at Tunbridge, lord Strafford carried us to Worksop, where we passed two days. The house is huge, and one of the magnificent works of old Bess of Hardwicke, who guarded the queen of Scots here for some time, in a wretched little bed-chamber within her own lofty one: there is a tolerable little picture of Mary's needlework. The great apartment is vast and trist, the whole leanly furnished. The great gallery, of above two hundred feet, at the top of the house, is divided into a library, and into nothing. The chapel is decent. There is no prospect, and the barren face of the country is richly furred with evergreen plantations, under the direction of the late lord Petre.

On our way we saw Kiveton, an ugly neglected seat of the duke of Leeds, with noble apartments, and several good portraits. Oh! portraits!—I went to Welbeck. It is impossible to describe the bales of Cavendishes, Harleys, Holleses, Veres, and Ogles; every chamber is tapestried with them, nay, and with ten thousand other fat morsels; all their histories inscribed; all their arms, crests, devices sculptured on chimnies of various English marbles in ancient forms (and, to say truth, most of them ugly). Then such a Gothic hall, with pendant fret-

work in imitation of the old, and with a chimney-piece extremely like mine in the library! such water-colour pictures! such historic fragments! In short, such and so much of every thing I like, that my party thought they should never get me away again. There is Prior's portrait, and the column and Varelst's flower on which he wrote; and the authoress duchess of Newcastle in a theatric habit, which she generally wore, and, consequently, looking as mad as the present duchess; and dukes of the same name, looking as foolish as the present duke; and lady Mary Wortley, drawn as an authoress, with rather better pretensions; and cabinets and glasses wainscoted with the Greendale oak, which was so large, that an old steward wisely cut a way through it to make a triumphal passage for his lord and lady on their wedding, and only killed it! But it is impossible to tell you half what there is. The poor woman, who is just dead, passed her whole widowhood, except in doing ten thousand right and just things, in collecting and monumenting the portraits and reliques of all the great families from which she descended, and which centred in her. The duke and duchess of Portland are expected there to-morrow, and we saw dozens of cabinets and coffer, with the seals not yet taken off. What treasures to revel over! The horseman duke's manege is converted into a lofty stable, and there is still a grove or two of magnificent oaks, that have escaped all these great families, though the last lord Oxford cut down above an hundred thousand pounds worth. The place has little pretty, distinct from all these reverend circumstances.

LETTER X.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, November 13, 1760.

EVEN the honey-moon of a new reign don't produce events every day. There is nothing but the common saying of addresses and kissing hands. The chief difficulty is settled; lord Gower yields the mastership of the horse to lord Huntingdon, and removes to the great wardrobe, from whence sir Thomas Robinson was to have gone into Ellis's

place, but he is saved. The city, however, have a mind to be out of humour; a paper has been fixed on the Royal Exchange, with these words, "No petticoat government, no Scotch minister, no lord George Sackville;" two hints totally unfounded, and the other scarce true. No petticoat ever governed less; it is left at Leicester House; lord George's breeches are as little concerned; and, except lady Susan Stuart and sir Harry Erskine, nothing has yet been done for any Scots. For the king himself, he seems all good-nature, and wishing to satisfy every body; all his speeches are obliging. I saw him again yesterday, and was surprised to find the levee room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. This sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news; he walks about and speaks to every body. I saw him afterwards on the throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answers to addresses well: it was the Cambridge address, carried by the duke of Newcastle in his doctor's gown, and looking like the *medecin malgré lui*. He had been vehemently solicitous for attendance, for fear my lord Westmoreland, who vouchsafes himself to bring the address from Oxford, should outnumber him. Lord Litchfield and several other jacobites have kissed hands: George Selwyn says, "They go to St. James's, because now there are so many *Stuarts* there."

Do you know I had the curiosity to go to the burying to'other night. I had never seen a royal funeral; nay, I walked as a rag of quality, which I found would be, and so it was, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight. The prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands, had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber. The procession, through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers with drawn sabres and crape sashes on horseback, the drums muffled, the fifes, bells tolling, and minute guns; all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the abbey, where we were

received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches, the whole abbey so illuminated, that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof all appearing distinctly, and with the happiest *chiara scuro*. There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct; yet one could not complain of its not being catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were not very accurate, and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older, to keep me in countenance. When we came to the chapel of Henry the Seventh, all solemnity and decorum ceased; no order was observed, people sat or stood where they could or would; the yeomen of the guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the bishop read sadly, and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter, *Man that is born of a woman*, was chaunted, not read; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected too one of his eyes, and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend: think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle: but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass, to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round,

found it was the duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatrical to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bed-chamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the king's order.

I have nothing more to tell you but a trifle, a very trifle. The king of Prussia has totally defeated marshal Daun. This, which would have been prodigious news a month ago, is nothing to-day; it only takes its turn among the questions, "Who is to be groom of the bed-chamber? What is sir T. Robinson to have?" I have been to Leicester Fields to-day; the crowd was immoderate; I don't believe it will continue so. Good night.

Yours ever.

LETTER XI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Houghton, March 25, 1761.

HERE I am at Houghton! and alone! in this spot, where (except two hours last month) I have not been in sixteen years! Think, what a crowd of reflections! No, Gray, and forty churchyards, could not furnish so many; nay, I know one must feel them with greater indifference than I possess, to have patience to put them into verse. Here I am, probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time: every clock that strikes tells me I am an hour nearer to yonder church—that church, into which I have not yet had courage to enter, where lies that mother on whom I doated, and who doated on me! There are the two rival mistresses of Houghton, neither of whom ever wished to enjoy it! There, too, lies he who founded its greatness, to contribute to whose fall Europe was embroiled; there he sleeps, in quiet and dignity, while his friend and his foe, rather his false ally and real enemy, Newcastle and Bath, are exhausting the dregs of their pitiful lives in squabbles and pamphlets.

The surprise the pictures gave me is again renewed; accustomed for many years to see nothing but wretched daubs and varnished copies at auctions, I look at these as enchantment. My own de-

scription of them seems poor; but shall I tell you truly, the majesty of Italian ideas almost sinks before the warm nature of Flemish colouring. Alas! don't I grow old? My young imagination was fired with Guido's ideas; must they be plump and prominent as Abishag to warm me now? Does great youth feel with poetic limbs, as well as see with poetic eyes? In one respect I am very young, I cannot satiate myself with looking: an incident contributed to make me feel this more strongly. A party arrived, just as I did, to see the house, a man and three women in riding-dresses, and they rode post through the apartments. I could not hurry before them fast enough; they were not so long in seeing for the first time, as I could have been in one room, to examine what I knew by heart. I remember formerly being often diverted with this kind of *seers*; they come, ask what such a room is called, in which sir Robert lay, write it down, admire a lobster or a cabbage in a market-piece, dispute whether the last room was green or purple, and then hurry to the inn for fear the fish should be over-dressed. How different my sensations! not a picture here but recalls a history; not one, but I remember in Downing Street or Chelsea, where queens and crowds admired them, though seeing them as little as these travellers!

When I had drank tea, I strolled into the garden; they told me it was now called the *pleasure-ground*. What a dissonant idea of pleasure! those groves, those *allées*, where I have passed so many charming moments, are now stripped up or overgrown—many fond paths I could not unravel, though with a very exact clew in my memory: I met two gamekeepers and a thousand hares! In the days when all my soul was tuned to pleasure and vivacity (and you will think, perhaps, it is far from being out of tune yet), I hated Houghton and its solitude; yet I loved this garden, as now, with many regrets, I love Houghton; Houghton, I know not what to call it, a monument of grandeur or ruin! How I have wished this evening for lord Bute! How I could preach to him! For myself, I do not want to be preached to; I have long considered, how every Balbec must wait for the chance of a Mr. Wood. The servants wanted to lay me in the great apartment—what, to make me pass my

night as I have done my evening! It were like proposing to Margaret Roper to be a duchess in the court that cut off her father's head, and imagining it would please her. I have chosen to sit in my father's little dressing-room, and am now by his scrutoire, where, in the height of his fortune, he used to receive the accounts of his farmers, and deceive himself, or us, with the thoughts of his economy. How wise a man at once, and how weak! For what has he built Houghton? for his grandson to annihilate, or for his son to mourn over. If lord Burleigh could rise and view his representative driving the Hatfield stage, he would feel as I feel now. Poor little Strawberry! at least it will not be stripped to pieces by a descendant! You will find all these fine meditations dictated by pride, not by philosophy. Pray consider through how many mediums philosophy must pass, before it is purified—

“—How often must it weep, how often burn.”

My mind was extremely prepared for all this gloom, by parting with Mr. Conway yesterday morning; moral reflections or common places are the livery one likes to wear, when one has just had a real misfortune. He is going to Germany: I was glad to dress myself up in transitory Houghton, in lieu of very sensible concern. To-morrow I shall be distracted with thoughts, at least images of very different complexion. I go to Lynn, and am to be elected on Friday. I shall return hither on Saturday, again alone, to expect Burleighides on Sunday, whom I left at Newmarket. I must once in my life see him on his grandfather's throne.

Epping, Monday night, thirty-first.

No, I have not seen him; he loitered on the road, and I was kept at Lynn till yesterday morning. It is plain I never knew for how many trades I was formed, when at this time of day I can begin electioneering, and succeed in my new vocation. Think of me, the subject of a mob, who was scarce ever before in a mob, addressing them in the town-hall, riding at the head of two thousand people through such a town as Lynn, dining with above two hundred of them, amid bumpers, huzzas, songs, and tobacco, and finishing with country dancing at a ball and sixpenny whisk! I have borne it

all cheerfully; nay, have sat hours in *conversation*, the thing upon earth that I hate, have been to hear misses play on the harpsichord, and to see an alderman's copies of Rubens and Carlo Marat. Yet to do the folks justice, they are sensible, and reasonable, and civilized; their very language is polished since I lived among them. I attribute this to their more frequent intercourse with the world and the capital, by the help of good roads and post-chaises, which, if they have abridged the king's dominions, have at least tamed his subjects. Well, how comfortable it will be to-morrow, to see my parroquet, to play at loo, and not be obliged to talk seriously! The Heraclitus of the beginning of this letter will be overjoyed on finishing it to sign himself your old friend,

DEMOCRITUS.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, that my ancient aunt Hammond came over to Lynn to see me; not from any affection, but curiosity. The first thing she said to me, though we have not met these sixteen years, was, “Child, you have done a thing to-day, that your father never did in all his life; you sat as they carried you, he always stood the whole time.” “Madam,” said I, “when I am placed in a chair, I conclude I am to sit in it; besides, as I cannot imitate my father in great things, I am not at all ambitious of mimicking him in little ones.” I am sure she proposes to tell her remarks to my uncle Horace's ghost, the instant they meet.

LETTER XII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, May 5, 1761.

We have lost a young genius, sir William Williams; an express from Belleisle, arrived this morning, brings nothing but his death. He was shot very unnecessarily, riding too near a battery; in sum, he is a sacrifice to his own rashness, and to ours. For what are we taking Belleisle? I rejoiced at the little loss we had on landing; for the glory, I leave it to the common council. I am very willing to leave London to them too, and do pass half the week at Strawberry, where my two passions, lilacs

and nightingales, are in full bloom. I spent Sunday as if it were Apollo's birthday; Gray and Mason were with me, and we listened to the nightingales till one o'clock in the morning. Gray has translated two noble incantations from the lord knows who, a Danish Gray, who lived the lord knows when. They are to be enchased in a history of English bards, which Mason and he are writing, but of which the former has not written a word yet, and of which the latter, if he rides Pegasus at his usual foot-pace, will finish the first page two years hence.

But the true frantic Cæstus resides at present with Mr. Hogarth; I went t'other morning to see a portrait he is painting of Mr. Fox. Hogarth told me he had promised, if Mr. Fox would sit as he liked, to make as good a picture as Vandyke or Rubens could. I was silent—"Why now," said he, "you think this very vain, but why should not one speak truth?" This *truth* was uttered in the face of his own Sigismonda, which is exactly a maudlin, tearing off the trinkets that her keeper had given her, to fling at his head. She has her father's picture in a bracelet on her arm, and her fingers are bloody with the heart, as if she had just bought a sheep's pluck in St. James's market. As I was going, Hogarth put on a very grave face, and said, "Mr. Walpole, I want to speak to you." I sat down, and said, I was ready to receive his commands. For shortness, I will mark this wonderful dialogue by initial letters.

H. I am told you are going to entertain the town with something in our way. W. Not very soon, Mr. Hogarth. H. I wish you would let me have it, to correct; I should be very sorry to have you expose yourself to censure; we painters must know more of those things than other people. W. Do you think nobody understands painting but painters? H. Oh! so far from it, there's Reynolds, who certainly has genius; why, but t'other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture that I would not hang in my cellar; and indeed, to say truth, I have generally found, that persons who had studied painting least were the best judges of it. But what I particularly wished to say to you was about sir James Thornhill. (you know he married sir James's daughter): I would not have you say any thing against him; there

was a book published some time ago, abusing him, and it gave great offence. He was the first that attempted history in England, and, I assure you, some Germans have said that he was a very great painter. W. My work will go no lower than the year one thousand seven hundred, and I really have not considered whether sir James Thornhill will come within my plan or not; if he does, I fear you and I shall not agree upon his merits. H. I wish you would let me correct it; besides, I am writing something of the same kind myself; I should be sorry we should clash. W. I believe it is not much known what my work is, very few persons have seen it. H. Why it is a critical history of painting, is not it? W. No, it is an antiquarian history of it in England; I bought Mr. Vertue's MSS. and, I believe, the work will not give much offence; besides, if it does, I cannot help it: when I publish any thing, I give it to the world to think of it as they please. H. Oh! if it is an antiquarian work, we shall not clash; mine is a critical work; I don't know whether I shall ever publish it. It is rather an apology for painters. I think it is owing to the good sense of the English that they have not painted better. W. My dear Mr. Hogarth, I must take my leave of you, you now grow too wild—and I left him. If I had staid, there remained nothing but for him to bite me. I give you my honour this conversation is literal, and, perhaps, as long as you have known Englishmen and painters, you never met with any thing so distracted. I had consecrated a line to his genius (I mean, for wit) in my preface; I shall not erase it; but I hope nobody will ask me if he is not mad. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XIII.

From the same to the same.

Arlington Street, April 6, 1763.

You will pity my distress when I tell you that lord Waldegrave has got the small-pox, and a bad sort. This day se'nnight, in the evening, I met him at Arthur's: he complained to me of the head-ache, and a sickness in the stomach. I said, "My dear lord, why don't you go home, and take James's powder, you will be well in the morning." He thanked

me, said he was glad I had put him in mind of it, and he would take my advice. I sent in the morning; my niece said he had taken the powder, and that James thought he had no fever, but that she found him very low. As he had no fever, I had no apprehension. At eight o'clock on Friday night I was told abruptly at Arthur's that Waldegrave had the small-pox. I was excessively shocked, not knowing if the powder was good or bad for it. I went instantly to the house; at the door I was met by a servant of lady Ailesbury, sent to tell me that Mr. Conway was arrived. These two opposite strokes of terror and joy overcame me so much, that when I got to Mr. Conway's, I could not speak to him, but burst into a flood of tears. The next morning lord Waldegrave, hearing I was there, desired to speak to me alone. I should tell you, that the moment he knew it was the small-pox he signed his will. This has been the unvaried tenor of his behaviour, doing just what is wise and necessary, and nothing more. He told me he knew how great the chance was against his living through that distemper at his age. That, to be sure, he should like to have lived a few years longer, but if he did not, he should submit patiently. That all he desired was, that if he should fail, we would do our utmost to comfort his wife, who, he feared, was breeding, and who, he added, was the best woman in the world. I told him he could not doubt our attention to her, but that at present all our attention was fixed on him. That the great difference between having the small-pox young, or more advanced in years, consisted in the fear of the latter, but that, as I had so often heard him say, and now saw, that he had none of those fears, the danger of age was considerably lessened. Dr. Wilmot says, that if any thing saves him, it will be his tranquillity. To my comfort, I am told, that James's powder has probably been a material ingredient towards his recovery. In the mean time the universal anxiety about him is incredible. Dr. Barnard, the master of Eton, who is in town for the holidays, says, that, from his situation, he is naturally invited to houses of all ranks and parties, and that the concern is general in all. I cannot say so much of my lord, and not do a little justice to my niece too. Her tender-

ness, fondness, attention, and courage are surprising. She has no fears to become her, nor heroism for parade. I could not help saying to her, "There never was a nurse of your age had such attention." She replied, "There never was a nurse of my age had such an object." It is this astonishes one, to see so much beauty sincerely devoted to a man so unlovely in his person; but if Adonis was sick, she could not stir seldom out of his bed-chamber. The physicians seem to have little hopes, but, as their arguments are not near so strong as their alarms, I own I do not give it up, and yet I look on it in a very dangerous light.

I know nothing of news and the world, for I go to Albemarle Street early in the morning, and don't come home till late at night. Young Mr. Pitt has been dying of a fever in Bedfordshire. The bishop of Carlisle, whom I have appointed visitor of Strawberry, is gone down to him. You will be much disappointed if you expect to find the gallery near finished. They threaten me with three months before the gilding can be begun. Twenty points are at a stand by my present confinement, and I have a melancholy prospect of being forced to carry my niece thither the next time I go. The duc de Nivernois, in return for a set of the Strawberry editions, has sent me four seasons, which I conclude he thought good, but they shall pass their whole round in London, for they have not even the merit of being badly old enough for Strawberry. Mr. Bentley's epistle to lord Melcomb has been published in a magazine. It has less wit by far than I expected from him, and to the full as bad English. The thoughts are old Strawberry phrases; so are *not* the panegyrics. Here are six lines written extempore by lady Temple, on lady Mary Coke, easy and genteel, and almost true:—

She sometimes laughs, but never loud;
 She's handsome too, but somewhat proud:
 At court she bears away the belle;
 She dresses fine, and figures well;
 With decency she's gay and airy;
 Who can this be but lady Mary?

There have been tough doings in parliament about the tax on cider: and in the western counties the discontent is so great, that if Mr. Wilkes will turn patriot hero, or patriot incendiary in earnest,

and put himself at their head, he may obtain a rope of martyrdom before the summer is over. Adieu! I tell you my sorrows, because, if I escape them, I am sure nobody will rejoice more.
Yours ever.

LETTER XIV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, Friday night, late.

AMIDST all my own grief, and all the distress which I have this moment left, I cannot forget you, who have so long been my steady and invariable friend. I cannot leave it to newspapers and correspondents to tell you my loss. Lord Waldegrave died to-day. Last night he had some glimmerings of hope. The most desponding of the faculty flattered us a little. He himself joked with the physicians, and expressed himself in this engaging manner, asking what day of the week it was; they told him Thursday. "Sure," said he, "it is Friday." "No, my lord, indeed it is Thursday." "Well," said he, "see what a rogue this distemper makes one; I want to steal nothing but a day." By the help of opiates, with which, for two or three days, they had numbed his sufferings, he rested well. This morning he had no worse symptoms. I told lady Waldegrave, that as no material alteration was expected before Sunday, I would go to dine at Strawberry, and return in time to meet the physicians in the evening; in truth, I was worn out with anxiety and attendance, and wanted an hour or two of fresh air. I left her at twelve, and had ordered dinner at three; that I might be back early. I had not risen from table, when I received an express from lady Betty Waldegrave, to tell me that a sudden change had happened, that they had given him James's powder, but that they feared it was too late, and that he probably would be dead before I could come to my niece, for whose sake she begged I would return immediately. It was, indeed, too late! too late for every thing—late as it was given, the powder vomited him even in the agonies. Had I had power to direct, he should never have quitted James. But these are vain regrets! vain to recollect how particu-

larly kind he, who was kind to every body, was to me! I found lady Waldegrave at my brother's; she weeps without ceasing, and talks of his virtues and goodness to her in a manner that distracts one. My brother bears this mortification with more courage than I could have expected from his warm passions: but nothing struck me more than to see my rough savage Swiss, Louis, in tears, as he opened my chaise. I have a bitter scene to come; to-morrow morning I carry poor lady Waldegrave to Strawberry. Her fall is great, from that adoration and attention that he paid her, from that splendour of fortune, so much of which dies with him, and from that consideration, which rebounded to her from the great deference which the world had for his character. Visions, perhaps. Yet who could expect that they would have passed away even before that fleeting thing, her beauty!

If I had time or command enough of my thoughts, I could give you as long a detail of as unexpected a revolution in the political world. To-day has been as fatal to a whole nation, I mean to the Scotch, as to our family. Lord Bute resigned this morning. His intention was not even suspected till Wednesday, nor at all known a very few days before. In short, there is nothing, more or less, than a panic; a fortnight's opposition has demolished that scandalous but vast majority, which a fortnight had purchased, and in five months a plan of absolute power has been demolished by a panic. He pleads to the world bad health; to his friends, more truly, that the nation was set at him. He pretends to intend retiring absolutely, and giving no umbrage. In the mean time he is packing up a sort of ministerial legacy, which cannot hold even till next session, and I should think would scarce take place at all. George Grenville is to be at the head of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, Charles Townshend to succeed him, and lord Shelburn Charles. Sir Francis Dashwood to have his barony of Despencer and the great wardrobe, in the room of lord Gower, who takes the privy seal, if the duke of Bedford takes the presidentship; but there are many ifs in this arrangement; the principal is, if they dare stand a tempest, which has so terrified the pilot. You ask what becomes of Mr. Fox? Not at all pleased

with this sudden determination, which has blown up so many of his projects, and left him time to heat no more furnaces, he goes to France by the way of the House of Lords, but keeps his place and his tools till something else happens. The confusion I suppose will be enormous, and the next act of the drama a quarrel among the opposition, who would be all powerful, if they could do what they cannot, hold together, and not quarrel for the plunder. As I shall be at a distance for some days, I shall be able to send you no more particulars of this interlude; but you will like a pun my brother made when he was told of this explosion: "Then," said he, "they must turn the *Jacks* out of the drawing-room again, and again take them into the kitchen." Adieu! what a world to set one's heart on! Yours ever.

LETTER XV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, April 14, 1763.

I HAVE received your two letters together, and foresaw that your friendly good heart would feel for us just as you do. The loss is irreparable, and my poor niece is sensible it is. She has such a veneration for her lord's memory, that if her sister and I make her cheerful for a moment, she accuses herself of it the next day to the bishop of Exeter*, as if he was her confessor, and that she had committed a crime. She cried for two days to such a degree, that if she had been a fountain it must have stopped. Till yesterday she scarce eat enough to keep her alive, and looks accordingly; but at her age she must be comforted: her esteem will last, but her spirits will return in spite of herself. Her lord has made her sole executrix, and added what little *douceurs* he could to her jointure, which is but a thousand pounds a-year, the estate being but three-and-twenty hundred. The little girls will have about eight thousand pounds a-piece; for the teller's place was so great during the war, that, notwithstanding his temper was a sluice of generosity, he had saved thirty thousand pounds since his marriage.

Her sisters have been here with us the

* The bishop of Exeter was married to a sister of lady Waldegrave.

whole time. Lady Huntingtower is all mildness and tenderness; and by dint of attention I have not displeased the other. Lord Huntingtower has been here once; the bishop most of the time: he is very reasonable and good natured, and has been of great assistance and comfort to me in this melancholy office, which is to last here till Monday or Tuesday. We have got the eldest little girl too, lady Laura, who is just old enough to be amusing; and last night my nephew arrived here from Portugal. It was a terrible meeting at first, but, as he is very soldierly and lively, he got into spirits, and diverted us much with his relations of the war and the country. He confirms all we have heard of the villany, poltroonery, and ignorance of the Portuguese, and of their aversion to the English; but I could perceive, even through his relation, that our flippancies and contempt of them must have given a good deal of play to their antipathy.

You are admirably kind, as you always are, in inviting me to Greatworth, and proposing Bath; but, besides its being impossible for me to take any journey just at present, I am really very well in health, and the tranquillity and air of Strawberry have done much good. The hurry of London, where I shall be glad to be just now, will dissipate the gloom that this unhappy loss has occasioned; though a deep loss I shall always think it. The time passes tolerably here; I have my painters and gilders, and constant packets of news from town, besides a thousand letters of condolence to answer; for both my niece and I have received innumerable testimonies of the regard that was felt for lord Waldegrave. I have heard of but one man who ought to have known his worth that has shewn no concern; but I suppose his childish mind is too much occupied with the loss of his last governor! I have given up my own room to my niece, and have betaken myself to the Holbein chamber, where I am retired from the rest of the family when I choose it, and nearer to overlook my workmen. The chapel is quite finished, except the carpet. The sable mass of the altar gives it a very sober air; for, notwithstanding the solemnity of the painted windows, it had a gaudiness that was a little profane.

I can know no news here but by rebound; and yet, though they are to re-

bound again to you, they will be as fresh as any you can have at Greatworth. A kind of administration is botched up for the present, and even gave itself an air of that fierceness with which the winter set out. Lord Hardwicke was told, that his sons must vote with the court, or be turned out; he replied, as he meant to have them in place, he chose they should be removed now. It looks ill for the court when he is sturdy. They wished too to have had Pitt, if they could have had him without consequences; but they don't find any recruits repair to their standard. They brag that they should have had lord Waldegrave; a most notorious falsehood, as he had refused every offer they could invent the day before he was taken ill. The duke of Cumberland orders his servants to say, that, so far from joining them, he believes, if lord Waldegrave could have been foretold of his death, he would have preferred it to an union with Bute and Fox. The former's was a decisive panic; so sudden, that it is said lord Egremont was sent to break his resolution of retiring to the king. The other, whose journey to France does not indicate much less apprehension, affects to walk in the streets at the most public hours, to mark his not trembling. In the mean time the two chiefs have paid their bravos magnificently: no less than fifty-two thousand pounds a-year are granted in reversion! *Young Martin*, who is older than I am, is named my successor; but I intend he shall wait some years: if they had a mind to serve me, they could not have selected a fitter tool to set my character in a fair light by the comparison. Lord Bute's son has the reversion of an auditor of the impost; this is all he has done ostensibly for his family, but the great things bestowed on the most insignificant objects, make me suspect some private compacts. Yet I may wrong him, but I do not mean it. Lord Granby has refused Ireland, and the Northumberlands are to transport their magnificence thither. I lament that you made so little of that voyage; but is this the season of unrewarded merit? One should blush to be preferred within the same year. Do but think that Calcraft is to be an Irish lord! Fox's millions, or Calcraft's tythes of millions, cannot purchase a grain of your virtue or character. Adieu! yours most truly.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the same.

Arlington Street, April 22, 1763.

I HAVE two letters from you, and shall take care to execute the commission in the second. The first diverted me much.

I brought my poor niece from Strawberry on Monday. As executrix, her presence was quite necessary, and she has never refused to do any thing reasonable that has been desired of her. But the house and the business have shocked her terribly; she still eats nothing, sleeps worse than she did, and looks dreadfully; I begin to think she will miscarry. She said to me t'other day, "They tell me, that if my lord had lived, he might have done great service to his country at this juncture, by the respect all parties had for him. This is very fine; but as he did not live to do those services, it will never be mentioned in history!" I thought this solicitude for his honour charming. But he will be known by history; he has left a small volume of memoirs, that are a *chef-d'œuvre*. He twice shewed them to me, but I kept his secret faithfully; now it is for his glory to divulge it.

I am glad you are going to Dr. Lewis. After an Irish voyage I do not wonder you want careening. I have often preached to you—nay, and lived to you too; but my sermons were flung away and my example.

This ridiculous administration is patched up for the present; the detail is delightful, but that I shall reserve for Strawberry-tide. Lord Bath has complained to Fanshaw of lord Pulteney's* extravagance, and added, "if he had lived he would have spent my whole estate." This almost comes up to sir Robert Brown, who, when his eldest daughter was given over, but still alive, on that uncertainty sent for an undertaker, and bargained for her funeral, in hopes of having it cheaper, as it was possible she might recover. Lord Bath has purchased the Hatton vault in Westminster Abbey, squeezed his wife, son, and daughter into it, reserved room for himself, and has set the rest to sale. Come; all this is not far short of sir Robert Brown.

* Son of the earl of Bath.

To my great satisfaction, the new lord Holland has not taken the least friendly, or even formal notice of me, on lord Waldegrave's death. It dispenses me from the least farther connection with him, and saves explanations, which always entertain the world more than satisfy.

Dr. Cumberland is an Irish bishop; I hope, before the summer is over, that some beam from your cousin's portion of the triumvirate may light on poor Bentley. If he wishes it till next winter, he will be forced to try still new sunshine. I have taken Mrs. Pritchard's house for lady Waldegrave: I offered her to live with me at Strawberry; but, with her usual good sense, she declined it, as she thought the children would be troublesome.

Charles Townshend's episode in this revolution passes belief, though he does not tell it himself. If I had a son born, and an old fairy were to appear and offer to endow him with her choicest gifts, I should cry out, "Powerful Goody, give him any thing but parts!" Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XVII.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon.
H. S. Conway.*

Strawberry Hill, May 1, 1763.

I FEEL happy at hearing your happiness; but, my dear Harry, your vision is much indebted to your long absence, which

Makes bleak rocks and barren mountains smile.

I mean no offence to Park Place; but the bitterness of the weather makes me wonder how you can find the country tolerable now. This is a May-day for the latitude of Siberia! The milkmaids should be wrapped in the *motherly comforts of a swan-skin petticoat*. In short, such hard words have passed between me and the north wind to-day, that, according to the language of the times, I was very near abusing it for coming from Scotland, and to imputing it to lord Bute. I don't know whether I should not have written a North Briton against it, if the printers were not all sent to Newgate, and Mr. Wilkes to the Tower—ay, to the Tower, *tout de bon*. The new ministry are trying to make up for their

ridiculous insignificance by a *coup d'eclat*. As I came hither yesterday, I do not know whether the particulars I have heard are genuine; but in the Tower he certainly is, taken up by lord Halifax's warrant for treason: vide the North Briton of Saturday was se'nnight. It is said he refused to obey the warrant, of which he asked and got a copy from the two messengers, telling them he did not mean to make his escape, but sending to demand his *habeas corpus*, which was refused. He then went to lord Halifax, and thence to the Tower; declaring they should get nothing out of him but what they knew. All his papers have been seized. Lord chief justice Pratt, I am told, finds great fault with the wording of the warrant.

I don't know how to execute your commission for books of architecture, nor care to put you to expense, which I know will not answer. I have been consulting my neighbour, young Mr. Thomas Pitt, my present architect: we have all books of that sort here, but cannot think of one which will help you to a cottage or a green-house. For the former you should send me your idea, your dimensions; for the latter, don't you rebuild your old one, though in another place? A pretty green-house I never saw; nor, without immoderate expense, can it well be an agreeable object. Mr. Pitt thinks a mere portico without a pediment, and windows removable in summer, would be the best plan you could have. If so, don't you remember something of that kind, which you liked, at sir Charles Cotterel's at Rousham? But a fine green-house must be on a more exalted plan. In short, you must be more particular, before I can be at all so.

I called at Hammersmith yesterday about lady Ailesbury's tubs; one of them is nearly finished, but they will not both be completed these ten days. Shall they be sent to you by water? Good night to her ladyship and you, and the infants, whose progress in waxen statuary I hope advances so fast, that by next winter she may rival Rackstrow's old man. Do you know, that, though apprised of what I was going to see, it deceived me, and made such impression on my mind, that, thinking on it as I came home in my chariot, and seeing a woman steadfastly at work in a window in Pall Mall,

it made me start to see her move.
Adieu! yours ever.

Arlington Street, Monday night.

The mighty commitment set out with a blunder; the warrant directed the printer and all concerned (unnamed) to be taken up. Consequently Wilkes had his *habeas corpus* of course, and was committed again; moved for another in the common pleas, and is to appear there to-morrow morning. Lord Temple being, by another strain of power, refused admittance to him, said, "I thought this was the Tower, but find it is the Bastille." They found among Wilkes's papers an unpublished North Briton, designed for last Saturday. It contained advice to the king not to go to St. Paul's on the thanksgiving, but to have a snug one in his own chapel; and to let lord George Sackville carry the sword. There was a dialogue in it, too, between Fox and Calcraft; the former says to the latter, "I did not think you would have served me so, Jemmy Twitcher."

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

Arlington Street, May 6, very late, 1763.

THE complexion of the times is a little altered since the beginning of this last winter. Prerogative, that gave itself such airs in November, and would speak to nothing but a Tory, has had a rap this morning that will do it some good, unless it is weak enough to do itself more harm. The judges of the common pleas have unanimously dismissed Wilkes from his imprisonment, as a breach of privilege; his offence not being a breach of the peace, only tending to it. The people are in transports; and it will require all the vanity and confidence of those able ministers, lord S*** and Mr. C***, to keep up the spirits of the court.

I must change this tone, to tell you of the most dismal calamity that ever happened. Lady Molesworth's house, in Upper Brook Street, was burned to the ground between four and five this morning. She herself, two of her daughters, her brother, and six servants, perished. Two other of the young ladies jumped out of the two pair of stairs and garret windows: one broke her thigh, the other (the eldest of all) broke her's too, and

has had it cut off. The fifth daughter is much burnt. The French governess leaped from the garret, and was dashed to pieces. Dr. Molesworth and his wife, who were there on a visit, escaped; the wife by jumping from the two pair of stairs, and saving herself by a rail; he by hanging by his hands till a second ladder was brought, after a first had proved too short. Nobody knows how or where the fire began; the catastrophe is shocking beyond what one ever heard: and poor lady Molesworth, whose character and conduct were the most amiable in the world, is universally lamented. Your good hearts will feel this in the most lively manner.

I go early to Strawberry to-morrow, giving up the new opera, madame de Boufflers, and Mr. Wilkes, and all the present topics. Wilkes, whose case has taken its place by the side of the seven bishops, calls himself the eighth—not quite improperly, when one remembers that sir Jonathan Trelawney, who swore like a trooper, was one of those confessors.

There is a good letter in the *Gazetteer* on the other side, pretending to be written by lord Temple, and advising Wilkes to cut his throat, like lord E***, as it would be of infinite service to their cause. There are published, too, three volumes of lady Mary Wortley's letters, which I believe are genuine, and are not unentertaining. But have you read Tom Hervey's letter to the late king? That beats every thing for madness, horrid indecency, and folly, and yet has some charming and striking passages.

I have advised Mrs. H*** to inform against Jack, as writing in the North Briton; he will then be shut up in the Tower, and may be shewn for old Nero*. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XIX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Stamford, Saturday night, July 23, 1763

"THUS far our arms have with success been crowned," bating a few mishaps, which will attend long marches like ours. We have conquered as many towns as Louis Quatorze in the campaign of seventy-two; that is, seen them, for he

* An old lion there, so called.

did little more, and into the bargain he had much better roads, and a drier summer. It has rained perpetually till to-day, and made us experience the rich soil of Northamptonshire, which is a clay-pudding, stuck full of villages. After we parted with you on Thursday, we saw Castle Ashby* and Easton Mauduit†. The first is most magnificently triste, and has all the formality of the Comptons. I should admire it if I could see out of it, or any thing in it, but there is scarce any furniture, and the bad little frames of glass exclude all objects. Easton is miserable enough; there are many modern portraits, and one I was glad to see of the duchess of Shrewsbury. We lay at Wellingborough—pray never lie there—the beastliest inn upon earth is there! We were carried into a vast bed-chamber, which I suppose is the clubroom, for it stunk of tobacco like a justice of peace. I desired some boiling water for tea; they brought me a sugar dish of hot water in a pewter plate. Yesterday morning we went to Boughton, where we were scarce landed, before the Cardigans, in a coach and three chaises, arrived with a cold dinner in their pockets, on their way to Deane; for, as it is in dispute, they never reside at Boughton. This was most unlucky, that we should pitch on the only hour in the year in which they are there. I was so disconcerted, and so afraid of falling foul of the countess and her caprices, that I hurried from chamber to chamber, and scarce knew what I saw, but that the house is in the grand old French style, that gods and goddesses lived over my head in every room, and that there was nothing but pedigrees all around me and under my feet, for there is literally a coat of arms at the end of every step of the stairs: did the duke mean to pun, and intend this for the *descent* of the Montagus? Well, we hurried away, and got to Drayton an hour before dinner. Oh! the dear old place! you would be transported with it. In the first place, it stands in as ugly a hole as Boughton: well! that is not its beauty. The front is a brave strong castle wall, embattled and loop-holed for defence. Passing the great gate, you come to a sumptuous but narrow modern court, behind which rises the old mansion, all towers and

turrets. The house is excellent; has a vast hall, ditto dining room, king's chamber, trunk gallery at the top of the house, handsome chapel, and seven or eight distinct apartments, besides closets and conveniences without end. Then it is covered with portraits, crammed with old china, furnished richly, and not a rag in it under forty, fifty, or a thousand years old; but not a bed or chair that has lost a tooth, or got a grey hair, so well are they preserved. I rummaged it from head to foot, examined every spangled bed, and enamelled pair of bellows, for such there are: in short, I do not believe the old mansion was ever better pleased with an inhabitant, since the days of Walter de Drayton, except when it has received its divine old mistress. If one could honour her more than one did before, it would be to see with what religion she keeps up the old dwelling and customs, as well as old servants, who, you may imagine, do not love her less than other people do. The garden is just as sir John Germain brought it from Holland; pyramidal yews, treillages, and square cradle walks, with windows clipped in them. Nobody was there but Mr. Beauclerc, and lady Catherine, and two parsons: the two first suffered us to ransack and do as we would, and the two last assisted us, informed us, and carried us to every tomb in the neighbourhood. I have got every circumstance by heart, and was pleased beyond my expectation, both with the place and the comfortable way of seeing it. We staid here till after dinner to-day, and saw Fotheringhay in our way hither. The castle is totally ruined. The mount, on which the keep stood, two door cases, and a piece of the moat, are all the remains. Near it is a front and two projections of an ancient house, which, by the arms about it, I suppose was part of the palace of Richard and Cicely, duke and duchess of York. There are two pretty tombs for them and their uncle duke of York in the church, erected by order of queen Elizabeth. The church has been very fine, but is now intolerably shabby; yet many large saints remain in the windows, two entire, and all the heads well painted. You may imagine we were civil enough to the queen of Scots, to feel a feel of pity for her, while we stood on the very spot where she was put to death: my companion, I believe, who is a better royalist than I am, felt a little

* A seat of the earl of Northampton.

† A seat of the earl of Sussex.

more. There, I have obeyed you. Tomorrow we see Burleigh and Peterborough, and lie at Ely; on Monday I hope to be in town, and on Tuesday I hope much more to be in the gallery at Strawberry Hill, and to find the gilders laying on the last leaf of gold. Good night! Yours ever.

LETTER XX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Hockerill, Monday night, July 25, Vol. 2d.

I CONTINUE. You must know we were drowned on Saturday night. It rained, as it did at Greatworth on Wednesday, all night and all next morning, so we could not look even at the outside of Burleigh, but we saw the inside pleasantly; for lord Exeter, whom I had prepared for our intentions, came to us, and made every door and every lock fly open, even of his magazines, yet unarranged. He is going through the house by degrees, furnishing a room every year, and has already made several most sumptuous. One is a little tired of Carlo Maratti and Lucca Jordano, yet still these are treasures. The china and japan are of the finest; miniatures in plenty, and a shrine full of crystal vases, filligree, enamel, jewels, and the trinkets of taste, that have belonged to many a noble dame. In return for his civilities, I made my lord Exeter a present of a glorious cabinet, whose drawers and sides are all painted by Rubens. This present, you must know, is his own, but he knew nothing of the hand or the value. Just so I have given lady Betty Germain a very fine portrait, that I discovered at Drayton in the woodhouse.

I was not much pleased with Peterborough; the front is adorable, but the inside has no more beauty than consists in vastness. By the way, I have a pen and ink that will not form a letter. We were now sent to Huntingdon in our way to Ely, as we found it impracticable, from the rains and floods, to cross the country thither. We landed in the heart of the assizes, and almost in the middle of the races, both which, to the astonishment of the virtuosi, we eagerly quitted this morning. We were hence sent south to Cambridge, still on our

way northward to Ely, but when we got to Cambridge we were forced to abandon all thoughts of Ely; there being nothing but lamentable stories of inundations and escapes. However, I made myself amends with the University, which I have not seen these four-and-twenty years, and which revived many youthful scenes, which, merely from their being youthful, are forty times pleasanter than any other ideas. You know I always long to live at Oxford: I felt that I could like to live even at Cambridge again. The colleges are much cleaned and improved since my days, and the trees and groves more venerable; but the town is tumbling about their ears. We surprised Gray with our appearance, dined and drank tea with him, and are come hither, within sight of land. I always find it worth my while to make journeys, for the joy I have in getting home again. A second adieu!

LETTER XXI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, eight o'clock, April 21, 1764.

I WRITE to you with a very bad head-ach; I have passed a night, for which *** and the duke of *** shall pass many an uneasy one. Notwithstanding I heard from every body I met, that your regiment, as well as bedchamber, were taken away, I would not believe it, till last night the duchess of Grafton told me, that the night before the duchess of ***** said to her, "Are not you very sorry for poor Mr. Conway? He has lost every thing*." When the witch of Endor pities, one knows she has raised the devil.

I am come hither alone, to put my thoughts into some order, and to avoid shewing the first sallies of my resentment, which I know you would disapprove; nor does it become your friend to rail. My anger shall be a little more manly, and the plan of my revenge a little deeper laid than in peevish *bons-mots*. You shall judge of my indignation by its duration.

* Mr. Conway had been dismissed from all his appointments, for having voted against the legality of general warrants, in the case of Wilkes.

In the mean time, let me beg you, in the most earnest and most sincere of all professions, to suffer me to make your loss as light as it is in my power to make it: I have six thousand pounds in the funds: accept all, or what part you want. Do not imagine I will be put off with a refusal. The retrenchment of my expenses, which I shall from this hour commence, will convince you that I mean to replace your fortune as far as I can. When I thought you did not want it, I had made another disposition. You have ever been the dearest person to me in the world. You have shewn that you deserve to be so. You suffer for your spotless integrity. Can I hesitate a moment to shew, that there is at least one man who knows how to value you? The new will, which I am going to make, will be a testimonial of my own sense of virtue.

One circumstance has heightened my resentment. If it was not an accident, it deserves to heighten it. The very day on which your dismission was notified, I received an order from the Treasury for the payment of what money was due to me there. Is it possible that they could mean to make any distinction between us? Have I separated myself from you? Is there that spot on earth, where I can be suspected of having paid court? Have I even left my name at a minister's door since you took your part? If they have dared to hint this, the pen that is now writing to you will bitterly undeceive them.

I am impatient to see the letters you have received, and the answers you have sent. Do you come to town? If you do not, I will come to you to-morrow se'nnight, that is, the 29th. I give no advice on any thing, because you are cooler than I am—not so cool, I hope, as to be insensible to this outrage, this villainy, this injustice! You owe it to your country to labour the extermination of such ministers!

I am so bad a hypocrite, that I am afraid of shewing how deeply I feel this. Yet last night I received the account from the duchess of Grafton with more temper than you believe me capable of: but the agitation of the night disordered me so much, that lord John Cavendish, who was with me two hours this morning, does not, I believe, take me for a hero. As there are some, who I know

would enjoy my mortification, and who probably designed I should feel my share of it, I wish to command myself—but that struggle shall be added to their bill. I saw nobody else before I came away but Legge, who sent for me, and wrote the enclosed for you. He would have said more, both to you and lady Ailesbury, but I would not let him, as he is so ill: however, he thinks himself that he shall live. I hope he will. I would not lose a shadow that can haunt these ministers.

I feel for lady Ailesbury, because I know she feels just as I do—and it is not a pleasant sensation. I will say no more, though I could write volumes. Adieu! yours, as I ever have been, and ever will be.

LETTER XXII.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon.
H. S. Conway.*

Arlington Street, April 24, 1764.

I REJOICE that you feel your loss* so little: that you act with dignity and propriety does not surprise me. To have you behave in character and with character, is my first of all wishes; for then it will not be in the power of man to make you unhappy. Ask yourself—Is there a man in England with whom you would change character? Is there a man in England who would not change with you? Then think how little they have taken away.

For me, I shall certainly conduct myself as you prescribe. Your friend shall say and do nothing unworthy of your friend. You govern me in every thing but one; I mean the disposition I have told you I shall make. Nothing can alter that but a great change in your fortune. In another point you partly misunderstood me. That I shall explain hereafter.

I shall certainly meet you here on Sunday, and very cheerfully. We may laugh at a world, in which nothing of us will remain long but our characters. Adieu! the dear family! Yours eternally.

* Of his employments.

LETTER XXIII.

From the same to the same.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1764.

LORD John Cavendish has been so kind as to send me word of the duke of Devonshire's legacy to you. You cannot doubt of the great joy this gives me; and yet it serves to aggravate the loss of so worthy a man! And when I feel it thus, I am sensible how much more it will add to your concern, instead of diminishing it. Yet do not wholly reflect on your misfortune. You might despise the acquisition of five thousand pounds simply; but when that sum is a public testimonial to your virtue, and bequeathed by a man so virtuous, it is a million. Measure it with the riches of those who have basely injured you, and it is still more! Why, it is glory, it is conscious innocence, it is satisfaction—it is affluence without guilt—Oh! the comfortable sound! It is a good name in the history of these corrupt days. There it will exist, when the wealth of your and their country's enemies will be wasted, or will be an indelible blemish on their descendants.

My heart is full, and yet I will say no more. My best loves to all your opulent family. Who says virtue is not rewarded in this world? It is rewarded by virtue, and it is persecuted by the bad. Can greater honour be paid to it? Yours ever.

LETTER XXIV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, Dec. 16, 1764.

As I have not read in the papers that you died lately at Greatworth, in Northamptonshire, nor have met with any Montagu or Trevor in mourning, I conclude you are living. I send this, however, to inquire; and, if you should happen to be departed, hope your executor will be so kind as to burn it. Though you do not seem to have the same curiosity about my existence, you may gather, from my hand-writing, that I am still in being; which being, perhaps, full as much as you want to know of me, I will trouble you with no farther particulars about

myself—nay, nor about any body else; your curiosity seeming to be pretty much the same about all the world. News there are certainly none; nobody is even dead, as the bishop of Carlisle told me to-day, which I repeat to you in general, though I apprehend in his own mind he meant no possessor of a better bishopric.

If you like to know the state of the town, here it is. In the first place, it is very empty; in the next, there are more diversions than the week will hold. A charming Italian opera, with no dances and no company, at least on Tuesdays; to supply which defect, the subscribers are to have a ball and supper; a plan, that, in my humble opinion, will fill the Tuesdays and empty the Saturdays. At both playhouses are woeful English operas, which, however, fill better than the Italian, patriotism being entirely confined to our ears; how long the sages of the law may leave us those, I cannot say. Mrs. Cornelis, apprehending the future assembly at Almack's, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin, but Almack's room, which is to be ninety feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers, as easily as Moses's rod gobbled down those of the magicians. Well, but there are more joys; a dinner and assembly every Tuesday at the Austrian minister's; ditto on Thursdays at the Spaniard's; ditto on Wednesdays and Sundays at the French ambassador's; besides madame de Welderen's on Wednesdays, lady Harrington's Sundays, and occasional private mobs at my lady Northumberland's. Then for the mornings, there are levees and drawing-rooms without end. Not to mention the macaroni club, which has quite absorbed Arthur's, for you know old fools will hobble after young ones. Of all these pleasures, I prescribe myself a very small pittance, my dark corner in my own box at the opera, and now and then an ambassador, to keep my French going till my journey to Paris. Politics are gone to sleep, like a paroli at Pharaoh, though there is the finest tract lately published that ever was written, called an Inquiry into the Doctrine of Libels. It would warm your old Algernon blood; but, for what any body cares, might as well have been written about the wars of York and Lancaster. The thing most in fashion is my edition of lord Herbert's life;

people are mad after it, I believe because only two hundred were printed; and, by the numbers that admire it, I am convinced, that, if I had kept his lordship's counsel, very few would have found out the absurdity of it. The caution with which I hinted at its extravagance, has passed with several for approbation, and drawn on theirs. This is nothing new to me; it is when one laughs out at their idols that one angers people. I do not wonder now that sir Philip Sidney was the darling hero, when lord Herbert, who followed him so close, and trod in his steps, is at this time of day within an ace of rivalling him. I wish I had let him; it was contradicting one of my own maxims, which I hold to be very just, that it is idle to endeavour to cure the world of any folly, unless we could cure it of being foolish.

Tell me whether I am likely to see you before I go to Paris, which will be early in February. I hate you for being so indifferent about me. I live in the world, and yet love nothing; care a straw for nothing, but two or three old friends, that I have loved these thirty years. You have buried yourself with half a dozen parsons and squires, and yet never cast a thought upon those you have always lived with. You come to town for two months, grow tired in six weeks, hurry away, and then one hears no more of you till next winter. I don't want you to like the world, I like it no more than you; but I stay awhile in it, because while one sees it one laughs at it, but when one gives it up one grows angry with it; and I hold it much wiser to laugh than to be out of humour. You cannot imagine how much ill blood this perseverance has cured me of: I used to say to myself, "Lord! this person is so bad, that person is so bad, I hate them." I have now found out that they are all pretty much alike, and I hate nobody. Having never found you out, but for integrity and sincerity, I am much disposed to persist in a friendship with you; but if I am to be at all the pains of keeping it up, I shall imitate my neighbours (I don't mean those at next door, but, in the scripture sense of neighbour, any body), and say, "That is a very good man, but I don't care a farthing for him." Till I have taken my final resolution on that head, I am yours most cordially.

LETTER XXV.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Rev.
Mr. Cole.*

Strawberry Hill, March 9, 1765.

Dear sir,

I HAD time to write but a short note with the Castle of Otranto, as your messenger called on me at four o'clock, as I was going to dine abroad. Your partiality to me and Strawberry have, I hope, inclined you to excuse the wildness of the story. You will even have found some traits to put you in mind of this place. When you read of the picture quitting its pannel, did not you recollect the portrait of lord Falkland, all in white, in my gallery? Shall I even confess to you, what was the origin of this romance? I waked one morning, in the beginning of last June, from a dream, of which, all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story), and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down, and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it—add, that I was very glad to think of any thing rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening I wrote from the time I had drunk my tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking, in the middle of a paragraph. You will laugh at my earnestness; but if I have amused you, by retracing with any fidelity the manners of ancient days, I am content, and give you leave to think me as idle as you please.

You are, as you have long been to me, exceedingly kind, and I should, with great satisfaction, embrace your offer of visiting the solitude of Blechely, though my cold is in a manner gone, and my cough quite, if I was at liberty: but as I am preparing for my fresh journey, and have forty businesses upon my hands, and can only now and then purloin a day, or half a day, to come hither. You know

I am not cordially disposed to *your* French journey, which is much more serious, as it is to be much more lasting. However, though I may suffer by your absence, I would not dissuade what may suit your inclination and circumstances. One thing, however, has struck me, which I must mention, though it would depend on a circumstance that would give me the most real concern. It was suggested to me by that real fondness I have for your MSS, for your kindness about which I feel the utmost gratitude. You would not, I think, leave them behind you; and are you aware of the danger you would run, if you settled entirely in France? Do you know, that the king of France is heir to all strangers who die in his dominions, by what they call the *Droit d'Aubaine*? Sometimes, by great interest and favour, persons have obtained a remission of this right in their lifetime: and yet that, even that, has not secured their effects from being embezzled. Old lady Sandwich had obtained this remission, and yet, though she left every thing to the present lord, her grandson, a man for whose rank one should have thought they would have had regard, the king's officers forced themselves into her house, after her death, and plundered. You see, if you go, I shall expect to have your MSS deposited with me. Seriously, you must leave them in safe custody behind you.

Lord Essex's trial is printed with the state trials. In return for your obliging offer, I can acquaint you with a delightful publication of this winter, *A Collection of Old Ballads and Poetry*, in three volumes, many from Pepys's Collection at Cambridge. There were three such published between thirty and forty years ago, but very carelessly, and wanting many in this set: indeed there were others, of a looser sort, which the present editor, who is a clergyman, thought it decent to omit.

When you go into Cheshire, and upon your ramble, may I trouble you with a commission? but about which you must promise me not to go a step out of your way. Mr. Bateman has got a cloister at Old Windsor, furnished with ancient wooden chairs, most of them triangular, but all of various patterns, and carved and turned in the most uncouth and whimsical forms. He picked them up one by one, for two, three, five, or six

shillings a piece from different farm houses in Herefordshire. I have long envied and coveted them. There may be such in poor cottages in so neighbouring a county as Cheshire. I should not grudge any expense for purchase or carriage; and should be glad even of a couple such for my cloister here. When you are copying inscriptions in a churchyard in any village, think of me, and step into the first cottage you see — but don't take further trouble than that.

I long to know what your bundle of MSS from Cheshire contains.

My bower is determined, but not at all what it is to be. Though I write romances, I cannot tell how to build all that belongs to them. Madame Danois, in the *Fairy Tales*, used to *tapestry* them with *jonquils*; but as that furniture will not last above a fortnight in the year, I shall prefer something more huckaback. I have decided that the outside shall be of *treillage*, which, however, I shall not commence, till I have again seen some of old Louis's old fashioned *galanteries* at Versailles. Rosamond's bower you, and I, and Tom Hearne know, was a labyrinth: but, as my territory will admit of a very short clew, I lay aside all thoughts of a mazy habitation; though a bower is very different from an arbour, and must have more chambers than one. In short, I both know, and don't know, what it should be. I am almost afraid I must go and read Spenser, and wade through his allegories and drawling stanzas, to get at a picture. But, good night! you see how one gossips, when one is alone, and at quiet on one's own dunghill! Well, it may be trifling; yet it is such trifling as ambition never is happy enough to know. Ambition orders palaces; but it is content that chats for a page or two over a bower. Yours ever.

LETTER XXVI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1765.

THE less one is disposed, if one has any sense, to talk of one's self to people that inquire only out of compliment, and do not listen to the answer, the more satisfaction one feels in indulging a self-complacency, by sighing to those that really sympathise with our griefs. Do not

think it is pain that makes me give this low-spirited air to my letter. No, it is the prospect of what is to come, not the sensation of what is passing, that affects me. The loss of youth is melancholy enough; but to enter into old age, through the gate of infirmity, most disheartening. My health and spirits made me take but slight notice of the transition; and, under the persuasion of temperance being a talisman, I marched boldly on towards the descent of the hill, knowing I must fall at last, but not suspecting that I should stumble by the way. This confession explains the mortification I feel. A month's confinement, to one who never kept his bed a day, is a stinging lesson, and has humbled my insolence to almost indifference. Judge then how little I interest myself about public events. I know nothing of them since I came hither, where I had not only the disappointment of not growing better, but a bad return in one of my feet, so that I am still wrapped up and upon a couch. It was the more unlucky, as lord Hertford is come to England for a very few days. He has offered to come to me, but as I then should see him only for some minutes, I propose being carried to town to-morrow. It will be so long before I can expect to be able to travel, that my French journey will certainly not take place so soon as I intended, and if lord Hertford goes to Ireland, I shall be still more fluctuating; for though the duke and duchess of Richmond will replace them at Paris, and are as eager to have me with them, I have had so many more years heaped upon me within this month, that I have not the conscience to trouble young people, when I can no longer be as juvenile as they are. Indeed I shall think myself decrepit, till I can again saunter into the garden in my slippers and without my hat in all weathers, a point I am determined to regain, if possible, for even this experience cannot make me resign my temperance and my hardness. I am tired of the world, its politics, its pursuits, and its pleasures, but it will cost me some struggles before I submit to be tender and careful. Can I ever stoop to the regimen of old age? I do not wish to dress up a withered person, nor drag it about to public places; but to sit in one's room, clothed warmly, expecting visits from folks I don't wish to

see, and tended and flattered by relations impatient for one's death! let the gout do its worst, as expeditiously as it can; it would be more welcome in my stomach than in my limbs. I am not made to bear a course of nonsense and advice, but must play the fool in my own way to the last, alone with all my heart, if I cannot be with the very few I wish to see; but to depend for comfort on others, who would be no comfort to me, this surely is not a state to be preferred to death; and nobody can have truly enjoyed the advantages of youth, health, and spirits, who is content to exist without the two last, which alone bear any resemblance to the first.

You see how difficult it is to conquer my proud spirit: low and weak as I am, I think my resolution and perseverance will get the better, and that I shall still be a gay shadow; at least I will impose any severity upon myself rather than humour the gout, and sink into that indulgence with which most people treat it. Bodily liberty is as dear to me as mental, and I would as soon flatter any other tyrant as the gout, my whiggism extending as much to my health as to my principles, and being as willing to part with life, when I cannot preserve it, as your uncle Algernon when his freedom was at stake. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XXVII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Saturday, Aug. 31, 1765, Strawberry Hill.

I THOUGHT it would happen so; that I should not see you before I left England! Indeed, I may as well give you quite up, for every year reduces our intercourse. I am prepared, because it must happen, if I live, to see my friends drop off; but my mind was not turned to see them entirely separated from me while they live. This is very uncomfortable, but so are many things! Well, I will go and try to forget you all. All! God knows the *all* that I have left to forget is small enough; but the warm heart, that gave me affections, is not so easily laid aside. If I could divest myself of that, I should not, I think, find much cause for friendship remaining; you, against whom I have no complaint, but that you satisfy

yourself with loving me without any desire of seeing me, are one of the very last that I wish to preserve; but I will say no more on a subject that my heart is too full of.

I shall set out on Monday se'nnight, and force myself to believe that I am glad to go, and yet this will be my chief joy, for I promise myself little pleasure in arriving. Can you think me boy enough to be fond of a new world at my time of life? If I did not hate the world I know, I should not seek another. My greatest amusement will be in reviving old ideas. The memory of what made impressions on one's youth is ten times dearer than any new pleasure can be. I shall probably write to you often, for I am not disposed to communicate myself to any thing that I have not known these thirty years. My mind is such a compound, from the vast variety that I have seen, acted, pursued, that it would cost me too much pains to be intelligible to young persons, if I had a mind to open myself to them. They certainly do not desire I should. You like my gossiping to you, though you so seldom gossip with me. The trifles that amuse my mind, are the only points I value now. I have seen the vanity of every thing serious, and the falsehood of every thing that pretended to be serious. I go to see French plays and buy French china, not to know their ministers, to look into their government, or think of the interests of nations—in short, unlike most people that are growing old, I am convinced that nothing is charming but what appeared important in one's youth, which afterwards passes for follies. Oh! but those follies were sincere; if the pursuits of age are so, they are sincere alone to self-interest. Thus I think, and have no other care but not to think aloud. I would not have respectable youth think me an old fool. For the old knaves, they may suppose me one of their number, if they please; I shall not be so—but neither the one nor the other shall know what I am. I have done with them all, shall amuse myself as well as I can, and think as little as I can; a pretty hard task for an active mind.

Direct your letters to Arlington Street, whence Favre will take care to convey them to me. I leave him to manage all my affairs, and take no soul but Louis. I am glad I don't know your Mrs. Anne;

her partiality would make me love her; and it is entirely incompatible with my present system to leave even a postern door open to any feeling, which would steal in, if I did not double bolt every avenue.

If you send me any parcel to Arlington Street, before Monday se'nnight, I will take great care of it. Many English books I conclude are to be bought at Paris. I am sure Richardson's works are, for they have stupified the whole French nation: I will not answer for our best authors. You may send me your list, and if I do not find them I can send you word, and you may convey them to me by Favre's means, who will know of messengers, &c. coming to Paris.

I have fixed no precise time for my absence. My wish is to like it enough to stay till February, which may happen, if I can support the first launching into new society. I know four or five very agreeable and sensible people there, as the Guerclys, madame de Mirepoix, madame de Boufflers, and lady Mary Chabot. These intimately, besides the duc de Nivernois, and several others that have been here. Then the Richmonds will follow me in a fortnight or three weeks, and their house will be a sort of home. I actually go into it at first, till I can suit myself with an apartment, but I shall take care to quit it before they come, for, though they are in a manner my children, I do not intend to adopt the rest of my countrymen; nor, when I quit the best company here, to live in the worst there; such are young travelling boys, and, what is still worse, old travelling boys, governors.

Adieu! remember you have defrauded me of this summer; I will be amply repaid the next, so make your arrangements accordingly. Yours ever.

LETTER XXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Paris, Nov. 21, 1765.

You must not be surprised when my letters arrive long after their date. I write them at my leisure, and send them when I find any Englishmen going to London, that I may not be kept in check, if they were to pass through both French and English posts.

Your letter to madame Roland, and the books for her, will set out very securely in a day or two. My bookseller here happens to be of Rheims, and knows madame Roland, *comme deux gouttes d'eau*. This, perhaps, is not a well-placed simile, but the French always use one, and when they are once established, and one knows the tune, it does not signify sixpence for the sense.

My gout and my stick have entirely left me. I totter still, it is true, but I trust shall be able to whisk about at Strawberry as well almost as ever. When that hour strikes, to be sure I shall not be very sorry. The sameness of the life here is worse than any thing but English politics and the House of Commons. Indeed I have a mind still to see more people here, more sights, and more of the Dumenil. The dauphin, who is not dead yet, detains the whole court at Fontainebleau, whither I dare not venture, as the situation is very damp, and the lodgings abominable. Sights, too, I have scarce seen any yet, and I must satisfy my curiosity; for hither, I think, I shall never come again. No, let us sit down quietly and comfortably, and enjoy our coming old age. Oh! if you are in earnest, and will transplant yourself to Roehampton, how happy I shall be! You know, if you believe an experience of above thirty years, that you are one of the very, very few, for whom I really care a straw. You know how long I have been vexed at seeing so little of you. What has one to do, when one grows tired of the world, as we both do, but to draw nearer and nearer, and gently waste the remains of life with the friends with whom one began it? Young and happy people will have no regard for us and our old stories; and they are in the right: but we shall not tire one another; we shall laugh together, when nobody is by to laugh at us, and we may think ourselves young enough when we see nobody younger. Roehampton is a delightful spot, at once cheerful and retired. You will amble in your chaise about Richmond Park: we shall see one another as often as we like; I shall frequently peep at London, and bring you tales of it, and we shall sometimes touch a card with the Clive, and laugh our fill; for I must tell you, I desire to die when I have nobody left to laugh with me. I have never yet seen or heard any thing

serious, that was not ridiculous. Jesuits, methodists, philosophers, politicians, the hypocrite Rousseau, the scoffer Voltaire, the encyclopedists, the Humes, the Lyttletons, the Grenvilles, the atheist tyrant of Prussia, and the mountebank of history, Mr. Pitt, all are to me but impostors in their various ways. Fame or interest are their objects; and after all their parade, I think a ploughman who sows, reads his almanack, and believes the stars but so many farthing candles, created to prevent his falling into a ditch as he goes home at night, a wiser and more rational being, and I am sure an honester, than any of them. Oh! I am sick of visions and systems, that shove one another aside, and come over again, like the figures in a moving picture. Rabelais brightens up to me as I see more of the world: he treated it as it deserved, laughed at it all, and, as I judge from myself, ceased to hate it; for I find hatred an unjust preference. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XXIX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Mr. Gray.

Paris, Jan. 25, 1766.

I AM much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice: and though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted, through this Siberian winter, in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open breasted, without an under waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can: it is not youth I court, but liberty; and I think making one's self tender is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this: you know my

volubility, when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

By what I said of their religious, or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality atheists—at least not the men. Happily for them, poor souls! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman catholic religion, because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present, too, they are a little triumphant: the court has shown a little spirit, and the parliaments much less: but as the duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the parliament of Bretagne, the parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniences.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority. I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country: if they are less gay than they were they are more informed, enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman,

with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship; and by a freedom and severity, which seems to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a week; has every thing new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams, aye, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or any body, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong: her judgment on every subject is as just as possible; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible; for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved (I don't mean by lovers), and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and ennui are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another and laugh at her; hate her because

she has forty times more parts—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She has an old friend, whom I must mention, a monsieur Pondevelle, author of the *Fat puni*, and the *Complaisant*, and of those pretty novels the *Comte de Cominge*, the *Siege of Calais*, and *les Malheurs de l'Amour*. Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is: yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances: for instance, he has adapted the *Regent's Daphnis and Chloe* to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but is so old, and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caractères de la danse*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters of love. With all this, he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation: seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humourist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can shew him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent of the useful kind, and can be so, when she pleases, of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shews it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorraine, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the king. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure, when it is her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the king to carry on a course of paying debts, or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made *dame du palais* to the queen; and the very next

day this princess of Lorraine was seen riding backwards with madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the king was stabbed and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted d'Argenson, whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, "By all means." Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The king recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and la marechale inherited part of the mistress's credit.—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads that approach to good ones, and who, luckily for us, was disgraced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. He employed Pondevelle to make a song on the Pompadour: it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and, lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the king that he had poisoned her predecessor, madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *sçavante*, mistress of the prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is gallant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible too, and has a measured eloquence, that is just and pleasing; but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit, that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and, though a *sçavante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of monsieur de Nivernois, for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels.

* * * * *

The duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre, but, as madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué par tout*; guerrier manqué, ambassadeur

manqué, homme d'affaires manqué, and auteur manqué—no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué*. He would think freely, but has some ambition of being governor to the dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former out-chatters the duke of Newcastle; and the latter, madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependent admirers, and madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

The duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes, and is a little model in waxwork, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Every body loves it but its husband, who prefers her own sister, the duchesse de Grammont, an Amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him. But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character, but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing, the *marechale de Luxembourg*. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good-breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person, and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or

exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable, as *mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont*, they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. The *passe-par-tout*, called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself. Yes, like queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing Cross, and have risen in the *Fauxbourg St. Germain*. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wildfire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had liked to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs: but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect: but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince or a learned canary bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the princess of Talmond, the queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat, a footstool, and a chamber-pot, in my journey to her pre-

sence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week, of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chesnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want any thing else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my *Seigné* researches but the frost. The *abbé* de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack *Livry*. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the *comte* de Grammont.—Adieu! You are generally in London in March; I shall be there by the end of it. Yours ever.

LETTER XXX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Mr. Gray.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1768.

You have sent me a long and very obliging letter, and yet I am extremely out of humour with you. I saw *Poems by Mr. Gray* advertised: I called directly at Dodsley's, to know if this was to be more than a new edition. He was not at home himself, but his foreman told me he thought there were some new pieces, and notes to the whole. It was very unkind, not only to go out of town without mentioning them to me, without shewing them to me, but not to say a word of them in this letter. Do you think I am indifferent, or not curious, about what you write? I have ceased to ask you; because you have so long refused to shew me any thing. You could not suppose I thought that you never write. No; but I concluded you did not intend, at least yet, to publish what you had written. As you did intend it, I might have expected a month's preference. You will do me the justice to own, that I had always rather have seen your writings than have shewn you mine, which you know are the most hasty trifles in the world, and which, though I may be fond of the subject when fresh, I constantly forget in a very short time after they are published. This would sound like affectation to others, but

will not to you. It would be affected, even to you, to say I am indifferent to fame. I certainly am not, but I am indifferent to almost any thing I have done to acquire it. The greater part are mere compilations; and no wonder they are, as you say, incorrect, when they are commonly written with people in the room, as Richard and the Noble Authors were. But I doubt there is a more intrinsic fault in them; which is, that I cannot correct them. If I write tolerably, it must be at once; I can neither mend nor add. The articles of lord Capel and lord Peterborough, in the second edition of the Noble Authors, cost me more trouble than all the rest together: and you may perceive, that the worst part of Richard, in point of ease and style, is what relates to the papers you gave me on Jane Shore, because it was tacked on so long afterwards, and when my impetus was chilled. If, some time or other, you will take the trouble of pointing out the inaccuracies of it, I shall be much obliged to you: at present I shall meddle no more with it. It has taken its fate; nor did I mean to complain. I found it was condemned indeed beforehand, which was what I alluded to. Since publication (as has happened to me before) the success has gone beyond my expectation.

Not only at Cambridge, but here, there have been people wise enough to think me too free with the king of Prussia! A newspaper has talked of my known inveteracy to him. Truly, I love him as well as I do most kings. The greater offence is my reflection on lord Clarendon. It is forgotten that I had overpraised him before. Pray turn to the new State Papers, from which, *it is said*, he composed his history. You will find they are the papers from which he did *not* compose his history. And yet I admire my lord Clarendon more than these pretended admirers do. But I do not intend to justify myself. I can as little satisfy those who complain that I do not let them know what *really* did happen. If this inquiry can ferret out any truth, I shall be glad. I have picked up a few more circumstances. I now want to know what Perkin Warbeck's proclamation was, which Speed, in his history, says is preserved by bishop Leslie. If you look in Speed, perhaps you will be able to assist me.

The duke of Richmond and lord Lyttelton agree with you, that I have not disculpated Richard of the murder of Henry VI. I own to you, it is the crime of which, in my own mind, I believe him most guiltless. Had I thought he committed it, I should never have taken the trouble to apologize for the rest. I am not at all positive or obstinate on your other objections, nor know exactly what I believe on many points of this story. And I am so sincere, that, except a few notes hereafter, I shall leave the matter to be settled or discussed by others. As you have written much too little, I have written a great deal too much, and think only of finishing the two or three other things I have begun; and of those, nothing but the last volume of *Painters* is designed for the present public. What has one to do, when turned fifty, but really think of *finishing*?

I am much obliged and flattered by Mr. Mason's approbation, and particularly by having had almost the same thought with him. I said, "People need not be angry at my excusing Richard; I have not diminished their fund of hatred; I have only transferred it from Richard to Henry." Well, but I have found you close with Mason.—No doubt, cry prating I, something will come out*.—Oh! no—leave us, both of you, to Annabellas and Epistles to Ferney, that give Voltaire an account of his own tragedies; to Macarony fables, that are more unintelligible than Pilpay's are in the original; to Mr. Thornton's hurdy-gurdy poetry; and to Mr. ****, who has imitated himself worse than any fop in a magazine would have done. In truth, if you should abandon us, I could not wonder. When Garrick's prologues and epilogues, his own Cymons and farces, and the comedies of the fools that pay court to him, are the delight of the age, it does not deserve any thing better.

Pray read the new account of Corsica. What relates to Paoli will amuse you much. There is a deal about the island and its divisions, that one does not care a straw for. The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like ****, has a

* "I found him close with Swift."—"Indeed!"—"No doubt,"

Cries prating Balbus, "something will come out."

Pope's Epistle to Arbuthnot.

rage of knowing any body that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris, in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about king Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too; but, as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see he now is a little sick of Rousseau himself, but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will, I am sure, entertain you.

I will add but a word or two more. I am criticised for the expression *tinker up* in the preface. Is this one of those that you object to? I own I think such a low expression, placed to ridicule an absurd instance of wise folly, very forcible. Replace it with an elevated word or phrase, and, to my conception, it becomes as flat as possible.

George Selwyn says I may, if I please, write historic doubts on the present duke of G**** too. Indeed they would be doubts, for I know nothing certainly.

Will you be so kind as to look into Leslie de rebus Scotorum, and see if Perkin's proclamation is there, and if there, how authenticated. You will find in Speed my reason for asking this.

I have written in such a hurry I believe you will scarce be able to read my letter: and as I have just been writing French, perhaps the sense may not be clearer than the writing. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XXXI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1768.

No, I cannot be so false as to say I am glad you are pleased with your situation. You are so apt to take root, that it requires ten years to dig you out again when you once begin to settle. As you go pitching your tent up and down, I wish you were still more a Tartar, and shifted your quarters perpetually. Yes, I will come and see you; but tell me first, when do your duke and duchess travel to the north? I know he is a very amiable lad, and I do not know that

she is not as amiable a *laddess*, but I had rather see their house comfortably, when they are not there.

I perceive the deluge fell upon you, before it reached us. It began here but on Monday last, and then rained near eight and forty hours without intermission. My poor hay has not a dry thread to its back. I have had a fire these three days. In short, every summer one lives in a state of mutiny and murmur, and I have found the reason: it is because we will affect to have a summer, and we have no title to any such thing. Our poets learnt their trade of the Romans, and so adopted the terms of their masters. They talk of shady groves, purling streams, and cooling breezes, and we get sore throats and agues with attempting to realize these visions. Master Damon writes a song, and invites miss Chloe to enjoy the cool of the evening, and the deuce a bit have we of any such thing as a cool evening. Zephyr is a north-east wind, that makes Damon button up to the chin, and pinches Chloe's nose till it is red and blue; and then they cry, *this is a bad summer*, as if we ever had any other. The best sun we have is made of Newcastle coal, and I am determined never to reckon upon any other. We ruin ourselves with inviting over foreign trees, and make our houses clamber up hills to look at prospects. How our ancestors would laugh at us, who knew there was no being comfortable, unless you had a high hill before your nose, and a thick warm wood at your back! Taste is too freezing a commodity for us, and depend upon it will go out of fashion again.

There is indeed a natural warmth in this country, which, as you say, I am very glad not to enjoy any longer; I mean the hot house in St. Stephen's chapel. My own sagacity makes me very vain, though there was very little merit in it. I had seen so much of all parties, that I had little esteem left for any; it is most indifferent to me who is in or who is out, or which is set in the pillory, Mr. Wilkes or my lord Mansfield. I see the country going to ruin, and no man with brains enough to save it. That is mortifying; but what signifies who has the undoing it? I seldom suffer myself to think on this subject: my patriotism could do no good, and my philosophy can make me be at peace.

I am sorry you are likely to lose your poor cousin lady Hinchinbrook; I heard a very bad account of her when I was last in town. Your letter to madame Roland shall be taken care of; but as you are so scrupulous of making me pay postage, I must remember not to overcharge you, as I can frank my idle letters no longer; therefore, good night! Yours ever.

P.S. I was in town last week, and found Mr. Chute still confined. He had a return in his shoulder, but I think it more rheumatism than gout.

LETTER XXXII.

The Honourable Horace Walpole to Monsieur de Voltaire.

Strawberry Hill, June 21, 1768.

Sir,

You read English with so much more facility than I can write French, that I hope you will excuse my making use of my own tongue to thank you for the honour of your letter. If I employed your language, my ignorance in it might betray me into expressions that would not do justice to the sentiments I feel at being so distinguished.

It is true, sir, I have ventured to contest the history of Richard the Third, as it has been delivered to us: and I shall obey your commands, and send it to you, though with fear and trembling; for though I have given it to the world, as it is called, yet, as you have justly observed, *that world is comprised within a very small circle of readers, and undoubtedly I could not expect that you would do me the honour of being one of the number.* Nor do I fear you, sir, only as the first genius in Europe, who have illustrated every science; I have a more intimate dependence on you than you suspect. Without knowing it, you have been my master; and perhaps the sole merit that may be found in my writings is owing to my having studied yours: so far, sir, am I from living in that state of barbarism and ignorance with which you tax me when you say *que vous m'êtes peut-être inconnu.* I was not a stranger to your reputation very many years ago, but remember to have then thought you honoured our house by dining with my

mother, though I was at school, and had not the happiness of seeing you : and yet my father was in a situation that might have dazzled eyes older than mine. The plain name of that father, and the pride of having had so excellent a father, to whose virtues truth at last does justice, is all I have to boast. I am a very private man, distinguished by neither dignities nor titles, which I have never done any thing to deserve ; but as I am certain that titles alone would not have procured me the honour of your notice, I am content without them.

But, sir, if I can tell you nothing good of myself, I can at least tell you something bad ; and, after the obligation you have conferred on me by your letter, I should blush if you heard it from any body but myself. I had rather incur your indignation than deceive you. Some time ago I took the liberty to find fault in print with the criticisms you had made on our Shakespeare. This freedom, and no wonder, never came to your knowledge. It was in a preface to a trifling romance, much unworthy of your regard, but which I shall send you, because I cannot accept even the honour of your correspondence, without making you judge whether I deserve it. I might retract, I might beg your pardon ; but having said nothing but what I thought, nothing illiberal or unbecoming a gentleman, it would be treating you with ingratitude and impertinence, to suppose that you would either be offended with my remarks, or pleased with my recantation. You are as much above wanting flattery, as I am above offering it to you. You would despise me, and I should despise myself—a sacrifice I cannot make, sir, even to you.

Though it is impossible not to know you, sir, I must confess my ignorance on the other part of your letter. I know nothing of the history of monsieur de Genonville, nor can tell whether it is true or false, as this is the first time I ever heard of it. But I will take care to inform myself as well as I can, and, if you allow me to trouble you again, will send you the exact account, as far as I can obtain it. I love my country, but I do not love any of my countrymen that have been capable, if they have been so, of a foul assassination. I should have made this inquiry directly, and informed you of the result of it in this letter, had

I been in London ; but the respect I owe you, sir, and my impatience to thank you for so unexpected a mark of your favour, made me choose not to delay my gratitude for a single post. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obliged and most obedient humble servant.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Strawberry Hill, July 27, 1768.

ONE can never, sir, be sorry to have been in the wrong, when one's errors are pointed out to one in so obliging and masterly a manner. Whatever opinion I may have of Shakespeare, I should think him to blame, if he could have seen the letter you have done me the honour to write to me, and yet not conform to the rules you have there laid down. When he lived, there had not been a Voltaire both to give laws to the stage, and to show on what good sense those laws were founded. Your art, sir, goes still farther : for you have supported your arguments, without having recourse to the best authority, your own works. It was my interest perhaps to defend barbarism and irregularity. A great genius is in the right, on the contrary, to show that when correctness, nay when perfection is demanded, he can still shine, and be himself, whatever fetters are imposed on him. But I will say no more on this head ; for I am neither so unpolished as to tell you to your face how much I admire you, nor, though I have taken the liberty to vindicate Shakespeare against your criticisms, am I vain enough to think myself an adversary worthy of you. I am much more proud of receiving laws from you than of contesting them. It was bold in me to dispute with you even before I had the honour of your acquaintance ; it would be ungrateful now, when you have not only taken notice of me, but forgiven me. The admirable letter you have been so good as to send me, is a proof that you are one of those truly great and rare men, who know at once how to conquer and to pardon.

I have made all the inquiry I could into the story of M. de Jumonville ; and though your and our accounts disagree, I own I do not think, sir, that the

strongest evidence is in our favour. I am told we allow he was killed by a party of our men, going to the Ohio. Your countrymen say, he was going with a flag of truce. The commanding officer of our party said M. de Jumonville was going with hostile intentions; and that very hostile orders were found after his death in his pocket. Unless that officer had proved that he had previous intelligence of those orders, I doubt he will not be justified by finding them afterwards; for I am not at all disposed to believe that he had the foreknowledge of your hermit, who pitched the old woman's nephew into the river, because *ce jeune homme auroit assassiné sa tante dans un an.*

I am grieved that such disputes should ever subsist between two nations, who have every thing in themselves to create happiness, and who may find enough in each other to love and admire. It is your benevolence, sir, and your zeal for softening the manners of mankind; it is the doctrine of peace and amity which you preach, that have raised my esteem for you even more than the brightness of your genius. France may claim you in the latter light, but all nations have a right to call you their countryman *du côté du cœur.* It is on the strength of that connection that I beg you, sir, to accept the homage of, sir, your most obedient humble servant.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Honourable Horace Walpole to the Honourable H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1774.

I SHOULD be very ungrateful indeed if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodness itself to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric positions. I am amazed, that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me so many and such long letters, over and above all those to lady Ailesbury, your daughter, brother, and other friends. Even lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your superabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never suspected. Even I enjoy

for you the distinctions you have received—though I should hate such things for myself, as they are particularly troublesome to me, and I am particularly awkward under them; and as I abhor the king of Prussia, and, if I passed through Berlin, should have no joy like avoiding him—like one of our countrymen, who changed horses at Paris, and asked what the name of that town was? All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil, well-meaning people, and I believe one of the least corrupted nations in Europe. I don't think them very agreeable; but who do I think are so? A great many French women, some English men, and a few English women—exceedingly few Frenchmen. Italian women are the grossest, vulgarest of the sex. If an Italian man has a grain of sense, he is a buffoon—So much for Europe.

I have already told you, and so must lady Ailesbury, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout used to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a suffering, such a helpless condition as I was in for five months and a half two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I should die at once if seized in a French inn; or what, if possible, would be worse, at Paris, where I must admit every body. I, who you know can hardly bear to see even you when I am ill, and who shut up myself here, and would not let lord and lady Hertford come near me—I, who have my room washed though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In short, I, who am so capricious, and whom you are pleased to call a philosopher, I suppose because I have given up every thing but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of every body's way! No, I must give up the satisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have just learnt to give up my pleasures, but I cannot give up my pains, which such selfish people as I, who have suffered much, grow to compose into a system, that they are partial to—because it is their own. I must make myself amends when you return: you will be more stationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I shall have intervals of health.

In lieu of me you will have a charming succedaneum, lady *****. Her father, who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wish she may not have him to nurse, instead of diverting herself.

The present state of your country is, that it is drowned and dead drunk; all water without and wine within. Opposition for the next elections everywhere, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the question: the day after tomorrow will be a great bustle in the city for a lord mayor*, and all the winter in Westminster, where lord Mahon and Humphrey Cotes oppose the court. Lady ***** is saving her money at Ludlow and Powis castles by keeping open house day and night against sir Watkin Williams, and fears she shall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming last Sunday night from lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Isleworth. Then we ran against the piers of our new bridge, and the horses were frightened. Luckily my cicisbea was a catholic, and screamed to so many saints, that some of them at the nearest alehouse came and saved us, or I should have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I should; for I concluded we should be carried ashore somewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you see one may wrap one's self up in flannel and be in danger, without visiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaise to the proof.

I am ashamed of sending you but three sides of smaller paper in answer to seven large—but what can I do? I see nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My castle is finished, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods around me; or, if I go to town, the family party in Grosvenor Street. One trait will give

you a sample of how I pass my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you, at least it was a fit of absence, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny treddle with the duchess of Newcastle and lady Browne, and certainly not much interested in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I pushed the cards very gravely to the duchess, and said, "*Doctor*, you are to deal." You may guess at their astonishment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wish it may make you smile a moment, or that I had any thing better to send you. Adieu most affectionately. Yours ever.

LETTER XXXV.

From the same to the same.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 28, 1774.

LADY Ailesbury brings you this, which is not a letter, but a paper of directions, and the counterpart of what I have written to madame du Deffand. I beg of you seriously to take a great deal of notice of this dear old friend of mine. She will perhaps expect more attention from *you*, as my friend, and as it is her own nature a little, than will be quite convenient to you: but you have an infinite deal of patience and good nature, and will excuse it. I was afraid of her importuning lady Ailesbury, who has a vast deal to see and do, and therefore I have prepared mad. du D. and told her lady Ailesbury loves amusements, and that, having never been at Paris before, she must not confine her: so you must pay for both—and it will answer: and I do not, I own, ask this only for madame du Deffand's sake, but for my own, and a little for yours. Since the late king's death she has not dared to write to me freely, and I want to know the present state of France exactly, both to satisfy my own curiosity, and for her sake, as I wish to learn whether her pension, &c. is in any danger from the present ministry, some of whom are not her friends. She can tell you a great deal if she will—by that I don't mean that she is reserved, or partial to her own country against ours—quite the contrary; she loves me better than all

* When Mr. Wilkes was elected.

France together—but she hates politics; and therefore, to make her talk on it, you must tell her it is to satisfy me, and that I want to know whether she is well at court, whether she has any fears from the government, particularly from Maurepas and Nivernois; and that I am eager to have monsieur de Choiseul and *ma grandmaman* the duchess restored to power. If you take it on this foot easily, she will talk to you with the utmost frankness and with amazing cleverness. I have told her you are strangely absent, and that, if she does not repeat it over and over, you will forget every syllable: so I have prepared her to joke and be quite familiar with you at once. She knows more of personal characters, and paints them better than any body: but let this be between yourselves, for I would not have a living soul suspect that I get any intelligence from her, which would hurt her; and therefore I beg you not to let any human being know of this letter, nor of your conversations with her, neither English nor French.

Mad. du Deffand hates *les philosophes*, so you must give them up to her. She and madame Geoffrin are no friends: so, if you go thither, don't tell her of it. Indeed you would be sick of that house, whither all the pretended *beaux esprits* and *faux sçavants* go, and where they are very impertinent and dogmatic.

Let me give you one other caution, which I shall give lady Ailesbury too. Take care of your papers at Paris, and have a very strong lock to your *portefeuille*. In the *hotels garnis* they have double keys to every lock, and examine every drawer and paper of the English that they can get at. They will pilfer too whatever they can. I was robbed of half my clothes there the first time, and they wanted to hang poor Louis to save the people of the house, who had stolen the things.

Here is another thing I must say. Madame du Deffand has kept a great many of my letters, and, as she is very old, I am in pain about them. I have written to her to beg she will deliver them up to you to bring back to me, and I trust she will. If she does, be so good to take great care of them. If she does not mention them, tell her just before you come away, that I begged you to bring them; and if she

hesitates, convince her how it would hurt me to have letters written in very bad French, and mentioning several people, both French and English, fall into bad hands and perhaps be printed.

Let me desire you to read this letter more than once, that you may not forget my requests, which are very important to me; and I must give you one other caution, without which all would be useless. There is at Paris a *mademoiselle de l'Espinasse*, a pretended *bel esprit*, who was formerly an humble companion of madame du Deffand; and betrayed her and used her very ill. I beg of you not to let any body carry you thither. It would disoblige my friend of all things in the world, and she would never tell you a syllable; and I own it would hurt me, who have such infinite obligations to her, that I should be very unhappy, if a particular friend of mine showed her this disregard. She has done every thing upon earth to please and serve me, and I owe it to her to be earnest about this attention. Pray do not mention it: it might look simple in me, and yet I owe it to her, as I know it would hurt her: and at her age, with her misfortunes, and with infinite obligations on my side, can I do too much to show my gratitude, or prevent her any new mortification? I dwell upon it, because she has some enemies so spiteful, that they try to carry all English to *mademoiselle de l'Espinasse*.

I wish the duchess of Choiseul may come to Paris while you are there; but I fear she will not: you would like her of all things. She has more sense and more virtues than almost any human being. If you choose to see any of the *sçavants*, let me recommend monsieur Buffon. He has not only much more sense than any of them, but is an excellent old man, humane, gentle, well-bred, and with none of the arrogant pertness of all the rest. If he is at Paris, you will see a good deal of the comte de Broglie at madame du Deffand's. He is not a genius of the first water, but lively and sometimes agreeable. The court, I fear, will be at Fontainebleau, which will prevent your seeing many, unless you go thither. Adieu! at Paris! I leave the rest of my paper for England, if I happen to have any thing particular to tell you.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Dr. Gem.*

Arlington Street, April 4, 1776.

IT is but fair, when one quits one's party, to give notice to those one abandons; at least modern patriots, who often imbibe their principles of honour at Newmarket, use that civility. You and I, dear sir, have often agreed in our political notions; and you, I fear, will die without changing your opinion. For my part, I must confess I am totally altered; and, instead of being a warm partisan of liberty, now admire nothing but despotism. You will naturally ask what place I have gotten, or what bribe I have taken? Those are the criterions of political changes in England; but, as my conversion is of foreign extraction, I shall not be the richer for it. In one word, it is the *relation du lit de justice*† that has operated the miracle. When two ministers‡ are found so humane, so virtuous, so excellent, as to study nothing but the welfare and deliverance of the people; when a king listens to such excellent men; and when a parliament, from the basest, most interested motives, interposes to intercept the blessing, must I not change my opinions, and admire arbitrary power? Or can I retain my sentiments, without varying the object?

Yes, sir, I am shocked at the conduct of the parliament—one would think it was an English one! I am scandalized at the speeches of the *avocat general*§, who sets up the odious interests of the nobility and clergy against the cries and groans of the poor, and who employs his wicked eloquence to tempt the good young monarch, by personal views, to sacrifice the mass of his subjects to the privileges of the few. But why do I call it eloquence? The fumes of interest had so clouded his rhetoric, that he falls into a downright Iricism. He tells the king, that the intended tax on the proprietors of land will affect the property, not only of the rich but of the

poor. I should be glad to know what is the property of the poor? Have the poor landed estates? Are those who have landed estates the poor? Are the poor, that will suffer by the tax, the wretched labourers, who are dragged from their famishing families to work on the roads? But it is wicked eloquence when it finds a reason, or gives a reason for continuing the abuse. The advocate tells the king, those abuses are *presque consacrés par l'ancienneté*. Indeed he says all that can be said for nobility, it is *consacrée par l'ancienneté*; and thus the length of the pedigree of abuses renders them respectable!

His arguments are as contemptible when he tries to dazzle the king by the great names of Henry Quatre and Sully, of Louis XIV and Colbert, two couple whom nothing but a mercenary orator would have classed together. Nor, were all four equally venerable, would it prove any thing. Even good kings and good ministers, if such have been, may have erred; nay, may have done the best they could. They would not have been good if they wished their errors should be preserved the longer they had lasted.

In short, sir, I think this resistance of the parliament to the adorable reformation planned by Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes, is more phlegmatically scandalous than the wildest tyranny of despotism. I forget what the nation was, that refused liberty when it was offered. This opposition to so noble a work is worse. A whole people may refuse its own happiness; but these profligate magistrates resist happiness for others, for millions, for posterity! Nay, do they not half vindicate Maupeou, who crushed them? And you, dear sir, will you now chide my apostasy? Have I not cleared myself to your eyes? I do not see a shadow of sound logic in all monsieur Seguier's speeches, but in his proposing that the soldiers should work on the roads, and that passengers should contribute to their fabric; though, as France is not so luxuriously mad as England, I do not believe passengers could support the expense of the roads. That argument, therefore, is like another that the *avocat* proposes to the king, and which, he modestly owns, he believes would be impracticable.

I beg your pardon, sir, for giving you this long trouble; but I could not help

* An English physician long settled at Paris, no less esteemed for his professional knowledge than for his kind attention to the poor, who applied to him for medical assistance.

† The first *lit de justice* held by Louis XVI.

‡ Messrs. de Malesherbes and Turgot.

§ Monsieur de Seguier.

venting myself, when shocked to find such renegade conduct in a parliament, that I was rejoiced had been restored. Poor human kind! is it always to breed serpents from its own bowels? In one country it chooses its representatives, and they sell it and themselves—in others it exalts despots—in another it resists the despot when he consults the good of his people!—Can we wonder mankind is wretched, when men are such beings? Parliaments run wild with loyalty, when America is to be enslaved or butchered. They rebel, when their country is to be set free!—I am not surprised at the idea of the devil being always at our elbows. They who invented him, no doubt could not conceive how men could be so atrocious to one another, without the intervention of a fiend. Don't you think, if he had never been heard of before, that he would have been invented on the late partition of Poland! Adieu, dear sir!

Yours most sincerely.

LETTER XXXVII.

*The Honourable Horace Walpole to the
Rev. Mr. Cole.*

Strawberry Hill, June 3, 1778.

I WILL not dispute with you, dear sir, on patriots and politics. One point is past controversy, that the ministers have ruined this country; and if the church of England's satisfied with being reconciled to the church of Rome, and thinks it a compensation for the loss of America, and all credit in Europe, she is as silly an old woman as any granny in an almshouse. France is very glad we are grown such fools, and soon saw that the presbyterian Dr. Franklin had more sense than our ministers together. She has got over all her prejudices, has expelled the Jesuits, and made the protestant Swiss, Necker, her comptroller general. It is a little woeful, that we are relapsing into the nonsense the rest of Europe is shaking off; and it is the more deplorable, as we know by repeated experience, that this country has always been disgraced by Tory administrations. The rubric is the only gainer by them in a few martyrs.

I do not know yet what is settled about the spot of lord Chatham's inter-

ment. I am no more an enthusiast to his memory than you. I knew his faults and his defects—yet one fact cannot only not be controverted, but I doubt more remarkable every day. I mean, that under him we attained not only our highest elevation, but the most solid authority in Europe. When the names of Marlborough and Chatham are still pronounced with awe in France, our little cavils make a puny sound. Nations that are beaten cannot be mistaken. I have been looking out for your friend a set of my heads of painters, and find I want six or seven. I think I have some odd ones in town; if I have not, I will have deficiencies supplied from the plates, though I fear they will not be good, as so many have been taken off. I should be very ungrateful for all your kindnesses, if I neglected any opportunity of obliging you, dear sir. Indeed our old and unalterable friendship is creditable to us both, and very uncommon between two persons who differ so much in their opinions relative to church and state. I believe the reason is, that we are both sincere, and never meant to take advantage of our principles, which I allow is too common on both sides, and I own too fairly more common on my side of the question than on yours. There is a reason too for that: the honours and emoluments are in the gift of the crown: 'the nation has no separate treasury to reward its friends.

If Mr. Tyrerwhit has opened his eyes to Chatterton's forgeries, there is an instance of conviction against strong prejudice! I have drawn up an account of my transaction with that marvellous young man; you shall see it one day or other, but I do not intend to print it. I have taken a thorough dislike to being an author; and if it would not look like begging you to compliment me, by contradicting me, I would tell you, what I am most seriously convinced of, that I find what small share of parts I had, grown dulled—and when I perceive it myself, I may well believe that others would not be less sharp-sighted. It is very natural; mine were spirits rather than parts; and as time has abated the one, it must surely destroy their resemblance to the other; pray don't say a syllable in reply on this head, or I shall have done exactly what I said I would

not do. Besides, as you have always been too partial to me, I am on my guard; and when I will not expose myself to my enemies, I must not listen to the prejudices of my friends; and as nobody is more partial to me than you, there is nobody I must trust less in that respect. Yours most sincerely.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Strawberry Hill, June 10, 1778.

I AM as impatient and in as much hurry as you was, dear sir, to clear myself from the slightest intention of censuring your politics. I know the sincerity and disinterested goodness of your heart; and when I must be convinced how little certain we are all of what is truth, it would be very presumptuous to condemn the opinions of any good man, and still less an old and unalterable friend, as I have ever found you. The destruction that violent arbitrary principles have drawn on this blinded country has moved my indignation. We never were a great and happy country till the Revolution. The system of these days tended to overturn and has overturned that establishment, and brought on the disgraces that ever attended the foolish and wicked councils of the house of Stuart. If man is a rational being, he has a right to make use of his reason, and to enjoy his liberty. We, we alone almost had a constitution that every other nation upon earth envied or ought to envy. This is all I contend for. I will give you up whatever descriptions of men you please; that is, the leaders of parties, not the principles. These cannot change, those generally do, when power falls into the hands of them or their party, because men are corruptible, which truth is not. But the more the leaders of a party dedicated to liberty are apt to change, the more I adore the principle, because it shows that extent of power is not to be trusted even with those that are the most sensible of the value of liberty. Man is a domineering animal; and it has not only been my principle, but my practice too, to quit every body at the gate of the palace. I trust we shall not much differ on these outlines, but we will bid adieu to the subject: it is never

an agreeable one to those who do not mean to make a trade of it.

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LETTER XXXIX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole, to the Earl of Stafford.

Strawberry Hill, June 12, 1780.

My dear lord,

IF the late events had been within the common proportion of news, I would have tried to entertain your lordship with an account of them; but they were far beyond that size, and could only create horror and indignation. Religion has often been the cloak of injustice, outrage, and villany: in our late tumults, it scarce kept on its mask a moment; its persecution was downright robbery; and it was so drunk, that it killed its banditti faster than they could plunder. The tumults have been carried on in so violent and scandalous a manner, that I trust they will have no copies. When prisons are levelled to the ground, when the bank is aimed at, and reformation is attempted by conflagrations, the savages of Canada are the only fit allies of lord George Gordon and his crew. The Tower is much too dignified a prison for him—but he had left no other.

I came out of town on Friday, having seen a good deal of the shocking transactions of Wednesday night—in fact it was difficult to be in London and not see, or think some part of it in flames. I saw those of the King's Bench, New Prison, and those on the three sides of the Fleet Market, which united into one blaze. The town and parks are now one camp—the next disagreeable sight to the capital being in ashes. It will still not have been a fatal tragedy, if it brings the nation *one* and all to their senses. It will still be not quite an unhappy country, if we reflect that the old constitution, exactly as it was in the last reign, was the most desirable of any in the universe. It made us *then* the first people in Europe—we have a vast deal of ground to recover—but can we take a better path than that which king William pointed out to us? I mean the system he left us at the revolution. I am averse to *all* changes of it—it fitted us just as it was.

For some time even individuals must

be upon their guard. Our new and now imprisoned apostle has delivered so many congenial Saint Peters from jail, that one hears of nothing but robberies on the highway. Your lordship's sister, lady Browne, and I have been at Twickenham Park this evening, and kept together, and had a horseman at our return. Baron d'Aguilar was shot at in that very lane on Thursday night. A troop of the fugitives had rendezvoused in Combe Wood, and were dislodged thence yesterday by the light horse.

I do not know a syllable but what relates to these disturbances. The newspapers have neglected few truths. Lies, without their natural propensity to falsehoods, they could not avoid, for every minute produces some, at least exaggerations. We were threatened with swarms of good protestants *à bruler* from all quarters, and report sent various detachments from the metropolis on similar errands; but thank God they have been but reports. Oh, when shall we have peace and tranquillity! I hope your lordship and lady Strafford will at least enjoy the latter in your charming woods. I have long doubted which of our passions is the strongest—perhaps every one of them is equally strong in some person or other—but I have no doubt but ambition is the most detestable, and the most inexcusable; for its mischiefs are by far the most extensive, and its enjoyments by no means proportioned to its anxieties. The latter, I believe, is the case of most passions; but then all but ambition cost little pain to any but the possessor. An ambitious man must be divested of all feeling but for himself. The torment of others is his high road to happiness. Were the transmigration of souls true, and accompanied by consciousness, how delighted would Alexander or Cæsar be to find themselves on four legs, and divested of a wish to conquer new worlds, or to heap up all the wealth of this! Adieu, my dear lord.

LETTER XL.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Rev.
Mr. Cole.*

Berkeley Square, May 4, 1781.

I SHALL not only be ready to shew

Strawberry Hill, at any time he chooses, to Dr. Farmer, as your friend; but to be honoured with his acquaintance; though I am very shy now of contracting new. I have great respect for his character and abilities, and judicious taste; and am very clear, that he has elucidated Shakspeare in a more reasonable and satisfactory manner than any of his affected commentators, who only complimented him with learning that he had not, in order to display their own.

Pray give me timely notice whenever I am likely to see Dr. Farmer, that I may not be out of the way, when I can have an opportunity of shewing attention to a friend of yours, and pay a small part of your gratitude to him. There shall be a bed at his service; for you know Strawberry cannot be seen in a moment; nor are Englishmen so *liants* as to get acquainted in the time they are walking through a house.

But now, my good sir, how could you suffer your prejudiced partiality to me to run away with you so extravagantly as to call me one of the greatest characters of the age? You are too honest to flatter, too much a hermit to be interested, and I am too powerless and insignificant to be an object of court, were you capable of paying it from mercenary views. I know, then, that it could proceed from nothing but the warmth of your heart. But if you are blind towards me, I am not so to myself. I know not how others feel on such occasions; but if any one happens to praise me, all my faults rush into my face, and make me turn my eyes inward and outward with horror. What am I, but a poor old skeleton tottering towards the grave, and conscious of ten thousand weaknesses, follies, and worse! And for talents, what are mine, but trifling and superficial; and, compared with those of men of real genius, most diminutive. Mine a great character! Merely on me! I am a composition of Anthony Wood and madame Danois, and I know not what trumpery writers. This is the least I can say to refute your panegyric, which I shall burn presently; for I will not have such an encomiastic letter found in my possession, lest I should seem to have been pleased with it. I enjoin you, as a penance, not to contradict one tittle I have said here; for I am not begging more compliments, and shall take it

seriously ill if you ever pay me another. We have been friends above forty years; I am satisfied of your sincerity and affection; but does it become us, at past threescore each, to be saying fine things to one another? Consider how soon we shall both be nothing!

I assure you, with great truth, I am at this present very sick of my little vapour of fame. My tragedy has wandered into the hands of some banditti book-sellers, and I am forced to publish it myself to prevent piracy. All I can do is to condemn it myself; and that I shall.

I am reading Mr. Pennant's new Welch tour: he has pleased me by making very handsome mention of you. But I will not do what I have been blaming.

My poor dear madame du Deffand's little dog is arrived. She made me promise to take care of it the last time I saw her; that I will most religiously, and make it as happy as is possible. I have not much curiosity to see your Cambridge Raphael, but great desire to see you, and will certainly this summer accept your invitation, which I take much kinder than your *great character*, though both flowed from the same friendship. Mine for you is exactly what it has been ever since you knew (and few men can boast so uninterrupted a friendship as yours and that of), &c.

P. S. I have seen the Monthly Review.

LETTER XLI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 27, 1781.

EACH fresh mark of your lordship's kindness and friendship calls on me for thanks and an answer: every other reason would enjoin me silence. I not only grow so old, but the symptoms of age increase so fast, that, as they advise me to keep out of the world, that retirement makes me less fit to be informing or entertaining. The philosophers who have sported on the verge of the tomb, or they who have *affected* to sport in the same situation, both tacitly implied that it was not out of their thoughts: and however dear what we are going to leave may be, all

that is not particularly dear must cease to interest us much. If those reflections blend themselves with our gayest thoughts, must not their hue grow more dusty when public misfortunes and disgraces cast a general shade? The age, it is true, soon emerges out of every gloom, and wantons as before. But does not that levity imprint a still deeper melancholy on those who do think? Have any of our calamities corrected us? Are we not revelling on the brink of the precipice? Does administration grow more sage, or desire that we should grow more sober? Are these themes for letters, my dear lord? Can one repeat common news with indifference, while our shame is writing for future history by the pens of all our numerous enemies? When did England see two whole armies lay down their arms, and surrender themselves prisoners? Can venal addresses efface such stigmas, that will be recorded in every country in Europe? Or will such disgraces have no consequences? Is not America lost to us? Shall we offer up more human victims to the demon of obstinacy? and shall we tax ourselves deeper to furnish out the sacrifice? These are thoughts I cannot stifle at the moment that enforces them; and though I do not doubt but the same spirit of dissipation, that has swallowed up all our principles, will reign again in three days with its wonted sovereignty, I had rather be silent than vent my indignation. Yet I cannot talk, for I cannot think, on any other subject. It was not six days ago, that in the height of four raging wars I saw in the papers an account of the opera, and of the dresses of the company; and thence the town, and thence of course the whole nation, were informed, that Mr. F***** had very little powder in his hair. Would not one think that our newspapers were penned by boys just come from school, for the information of their sisters and cousins? Had we had *Gazettes* and *Morning Posts* in those days, would they have been filled with such tittle-tattle after the battle of Agincourt, or in the more resembling weeks after the battle of Naseby? Did the French trifle equally even during the ridiculous war of the Fronde? If they were as impertinent then, at least they had wit in their levity. We are monkeys in conduct, and as clumsy as bears when we try to gambol.

Oh, my lord! I have no patience with my country, and shall leave it without regret! Can we be proud when all Europe scorns us? It was wont to envy us, sometimes to hate us, but never despised us before. James the First was contemptible, but he did not lose an America! His eldest grandson sold us, his younger lost us—but we kept ourselves. Now we have run to meet the ruin—and it is coming!

I beg your lordship's pardon if I have said too much, but I do not believe I have. You have never sold yourself, and, therefore, have not been accessary to our destruction. You must be happy *now* not to have a son, who would live to grovel in the dregs of England. Your lordship has long been so wise as to secede from the follies of your countrymen. May you and lady Strafford long enjoy the tranquillity that has been your option even in better days! and may you amuse yourself without giving loose to such reflections as have overflowed in this letter from your devoted humble servant.

LETTER XLII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 1, 1783.

It would be great happiness indeed to me, my dear lord, if such nothings as my letters could contribute to any part of your lordship's; but as your own partiality bestows their chief merit on them, you see they owe more to your friendship than to the writer. It is not my interest to depreciate them; much less to undermine the foundation of their sole worth. Yet it would be dishonest not to warn your lordship, that if my letters have had any intrinsic recommendation, they must lose of it every day. Years and frequent returns of gout have made a ruin of me. Dulness, in the form of indolence, grows upon me. I am inactive, lifeless, and so indifferent to most things, that I neither inquire after nor remember any topics that might enliven my letters. Nothing is so insipid as my way of passing my time. But I need not specify what my letters speak: they can have no spirit left, and would be perfectly inanimate, if attachment and gratitude to your lordship were

as liable to be extinguished by old age as our more amusing qualities. I make no new connections; but cherish those that remain with all the warmth of youth and the piety of grey hairs.

The weather here has been, and is, with very few intervals, sultry to this moment. I think it has been of service to me; though by overheating myself I had a few days of lameness. The harvest is half over already all round us, and so pure, that not a poppy or cornflower is to be seen. Every field seems to have been weeded, like B****'s bowling-green. If Ceres, who is at least as old as many of our fashionable ladies, loves tricking herself out in flowers as they do, she must be mortified; and with more reason, for she looks well always with top-knots of ultramarine and vermilion, which modern goddesses do not for half so long as they think they do. As Providence showers so many blessings on us, I wish the peace may confirm them. Necessary I am sure it was; and when it cannot restore us, where should we have been had the war continued? Of our situation and prospect I confess my opinion is melancholy; not from present politics but from past. We flung away the most brilliant position; I doubt for a long season. With politics I have totally done. I wish the present ministers may last, for I think better of their principles than of those of their opponents (with a few salvos on both sides), and so I do of their abilities. But it would be folly in me to concern myself about new generations: how little a way can I see of their progress!

I am rather surprised at the new countess of ****. How could a woman be ambitious of resembling Prometheus, to be pawed, and clawed, and gnawed by a vulture? I beg your earl-dom's pardon, but I could not conceive that a coronet was so very tempting!

Lady Browne is quite recovered—unless she relapses from what we suffer at Twickenham Park, from a lord N****, an old seaman, who is come to Richmond on a visit to the duke of Montrose. I think the poor man must be out of his senses—at least he talks us out of ours. It is the most incessant and incoherent rhapsody that ever was heard. He sits by the card-table, and pours on Mrs. N**** all that ever

happened in his voyages or his memory. He details the ship's allowance, and talks to her as if she were his first mate. Then in the mornings he carries his daughter to town to see St. Paul's, and the Tower, and Westminster Abbey; and at night disgorges all he has seen; till we don't know the ace of spades from queen Elizabeth's pocket pistol in the armoury. Mercy on us! and mercy on your lordship too! Why should you be stunned with that alarm? Have you had your earthquake, my lord? Many have had theirs. I assure you I have had mine. Above a week ago, when broad awake, the doors of the cabinet by my bedside rattled, without a breath of wind. I imagined somebody was walking on the leads, or had broken into the room under me. It was between four and five in the morning. I rang my bell. Before my servant could come it happened again, and was exactly like the horizontal tremor I felt from the earthquake some years ago. As I had rung once, it is plain I was awake. I rang again, but heard nothing more. I am quite persuaded there was some commotion; nor is it surprising, that the dreadful eruptions of fire on the coasts of Italy and Sicily should have occasioned some alteration, that has extended faintly hither, and contributed to the heats and mists that have been so extraordinary. George Montagu said of our last earthquake, that it was so tame you might have stroked it. It is comfortable to live where one can reason on them without dreading them. What satisfaction should you have in having erected such a monument of your taste, my lord, as Wentworth Castle, if you did not know but it might be overturned in a moment and crush you? Sir William Hamilton is expected; he has been groping in all these devastations. Of all vocations I would not be a professor of earthquakes. I prefer studies that are *couleur de rose*; nor would ever think of calamities, if I can do nothing to relieve them. Yet this is a weakness of mind that I do not defend. They are more respectable, who can behold philosophically the great theatre of events—or rather this little theatre of ours! In some ampler sphere, they may look on the catastrophe of Messina as we do on kicking to pieces an ant-hill.

Bless me! what a farrago is my let-

ter! It is like the extracts of books in a monthly magazine—I had no right to censure poor lord N * * * *s ramblings. Lady Strafford will think he has infected me. Good night, my dear lord and lady. Your ever devoted.

LETTER XLIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Mr. Pinkerton.*

March, 17, 1785.

I AM much obliged to you, sir, for the many civil and kind expressions in your letter, and for the friendly information you give me. Partiality, I fear, dictated the former; but the last I can only ascribe to the goodness of your heart.

I have published nothing of any size but the pieces you mention, and one or two small tracts, now out of print and forgotten. The rest have been prefaces to some of my Strawberry editions, and to a few other publications, and some fugitive pieces, which I reprinted several years ago in a small volume, and which shall be at your service with the Catalogue of Noble Authors.

With regard to the bookseller who has taken the trouble to collect my writings (amongst which I do not doubt but he will generously bestow on me many that I did not write, according to the laudable practice of such compilers), and who also intends to write my life, to which, as I never did any thing worth the notice of the public, he must likewise be a volunteer contributor, it would be vain for me to endeavour to prevent such a design. Whoever has been so unadvised as to throw himself on the public, must pay such a tax in a pamphlet or a magazine when he dies; but happily the insects that prey on carrion are still more short-lived than the carcasses were from which they draw temporary nutriment. Those momentary abortions live but a day, and are thrust aside like embryos. Literary characters, when not illustrious, are known only to a few literary men, and, amidst the world of books, few readers can come to my share. Printing, that secures existence (in libraries) to indifferent authors of any bulk, is like

* The author of an Essay on Medals, and the History of Scotland from the Accession of the House of Stuart to that of Mary, &c. &c.

those cases of Egyptian mummies which in catacombs preserve bodies of one knows not whom, and which are scribbled over with characters that nobody attempts to read, till nobody understands the language in which they were written.

I believe, therefore, it will be most wise to swim for a moment on the passing current, secure that it will soon hurry me into the ocean where all things are forgotten. To appoint a biographer is to bespeak a panegyric; and I doubt whether they who collect their works for the public, and, like me, are conscious of no intrinsic worth, do not beg mankind to accept of talents (whatever they were) in lieu of virtues. To anticipate spurious publications by a comprehensive and authentic one, is almost as great an evil. It is giving a body to scattered atoms; and such an act, in one's old age, is declaring a fondness for the indiscretions of youth, or for trifles of an age, which, though more mature, is only the less excusable. It is most true, sir, that so far from being prejudiced in favour of my own writings, I am persuaded that, had I thought early as I think now, I should never have appeared as an author. Age, frequent illness, and pain, have given me many hours of reflection in the intervals of the latter, which, besides shewing me the inutility of all our little views, have suggested an observation that I love to encourage in myself, from the rationality of it. I have learnt and have practised the mortifying task of comparing myself with great authors, and that comparison has annihilated all the flattery that self-love could suggest. I know how trifling my own writings are, and how far below the standard that constitutes excellence; for the shades that distinguish the degrees of mediocrity, they are not worth discrimination; and he must be humble, or easily satisfied, who can be content to glimmer for a moment a little more than his brethren glow-worms. Mine therefore, you find, sir, is not humility, but pride. When young, I wished for fame; not examining whether I was capable of attaining it, nor considering in what light fame was desirable. There are two sorts of honest fame—that attendant on the truly great, and that better kind which is due to the good. I fear I did not aim at the latter, nor discovered that I could never

compass the former. Having neglected the best road, and having, instead of the other, strolled into a narrow path that led to no goal worth seeking, I see the idleness of my journey, and hold it more graceful to abandon my wanderings to chance or oblivion, than to mark solicitude for trifles, which I think so myself.

I beg your pardon for talking so much about myself; but an answer was due to the unmerited attention you have paid to my writings. I turn with more pleasure to speak on yours. Forgive me if I shall blame you, whether you either abandon your intention*, or are too impatient to finish it. Your preface proves that you are capable of treating the subject ably; but allow me to repeat, that it is a kind of subject that ought not to be executed impetuously. A mere recapitulation of authenticated facts would be dry. A more enlarged plan would demand acquaintance with the characters of the actors, and with the *probable* sources of measures. The age is accustomed to details and anecdotes; and the age immediately preceding his own is less known to any man than the history of any other period. You are young enough, sir, to collect information on many particulars that will occur in your progress, from living actors, at least from their contemporaries; and great as your ardour may be, you will find yourself delayed by the want of materials and by further necessary inquiries. As you have variety of talents, why should you not exercise them on works that will admit of more rapidity, and, at the same time, at leisure moments, commence, digest, and enrich your plan, by collecting new matter for it?

In one word, I have too much zeal for your credit, not to dissuade precipitation in a work of the kind you meditate. That I speak sincerely and without flattery, you are sure, as accident, not design, made you acquainted with my admiration of your tract on medals. If I wish to delay your history, it must be that it may appear with more advantages; and I must speak disinterestedly, as my age will not allow me to hope to see it, if not finished soon. I should not forgive myself if I turned you from prosecution of your work; but as I am sure my writings can have given you no opi-

* Of writing a History of the Reign of George II.

nion of my having sound and deep judgment, pray follow your own, and allow no merit but that of sincerity and zeal to the sentiments of your obliged and obedient humble servant.

LETTER XLIV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, August 29, 1786.

SINCE I received the honour of your lordship's last, I have been at Park Place for a few days. Lord and lady Frederick Campbell and Mrs. Damer were there. We went on the Thames to see the new bridge at Henley, and Mrs. Damer's colossal masks. There is not a sight in the island more worthy of being visited. The bridge is as perfect as if bridges were natural productions, and as beautiful as if it had been built for Wentworth Castle; and the masks as if the Romans had left them here. We saw them in a fortunate moment; for the rest of the time was very cold and uncomfortable, and the evenings as chill as many we have had lately. In short, I am come to think that the beginning of an old ditty, which passes for a collection of blunders, was really an old English pastoral, it is so descriptive of our climate:—

Three children sliding on the ice,
All on a summer's day—

I have been overwhelmed more than ever by visitants to my house. Yesterday I had count Oghinski, who was a pretender to the crown of Poland at the last election, and has been stripped of most of a vast estate. He had on a ring of the new king of Prussia, or I should have wished him joy on the death of one of the plunderers of his country.

It has long been my opinion, that the out-pensioners of Bedlam are so numerous, that the shortest and cheapest way would be to confine in Moorfields the few that remain in their senses, who would then be safe; and let the rest go at large. They are the out-pensioners who are for destroying poor dogs! The whole canine race never did half so much mischief as lord George Gordon; nor even worry hares, but when hallooed on by men. As it is a persecution of animals, I do not love hunting; and what

old writers mention as a commendation makes me hate it the more, its being an image of war. Mercy on us! that destruction of any species should be a sport or a merit! What cruel, unreflecting imps we are! Every body is unwilling to die, yet sacrifices the lives of others to momentary pastime, or to the still emptier vapour, fame! A hero or a sportsman who wishes for longer life is desirous of prolonging devastation. We shall be crammed, I suppose, with panegyrics and epitaphs on the king of Prussia. I am content that he can now have an epitaph. But, alas! the emperor will write one for him probably in blood! and, while he shuts up convents for the sake of population, will be stuffing hospitals with maimed soldiers, besides making thousands of widows! I have just been reading a new published history of the colleges in Oxford, by Anthony Wood, and there found a feature in a character that always offended me, that of archbishop Chicheley, who prompted Henry V. to the invasion of France, to divert him from squeezing the overgrown clergy. When that priest meditated founding All Souls, and "consulted his friends (who seem to have been honest men) what great matter of piety he had best perform to God in his old age, he was advised by them to build an hospital for the wounded and sick soldiers, that daily returned from the wars then had in France;"—I doubt his grace's friends thought as I do of his artifice—"but," continues the historian, "*disliking those motions*, and valuing the welfare of the deceased more than the wounded and diseased, he resolved with himself to promote his design, which was, to have masses said for the king, queen, and himself, &c. while living, and for their souls when dead." And that mummery the old foolish rogue thought more efficacious than ointments and medicines for the wretches he had made! And of the chaplains and clerks he instituted in that dormitory, one was to teach grammar, and another, prick-song. How history makes one shudder and laugh by turns! But I fear I have wearied your lordship with my idle declamation, and you will repent having commanded me to send you more letters; and I can only plead that I am your (perhaps too) obedient humble servant.

LETTER XLV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Lady Craven.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1788.

IT is agreeable to your ladyship's usual goodness to honour me with another letter—and I may say to your equity too, after I had proved to monsieur Mercier, by the list of dates of my letters, that it was not mine but the post's fault, that you did not receive one that I had the honour of writing to you above a year ago. Not, madam, that I could wonder if you had the prudence to drop a correspondence with an old superannuated man, who, conscious of his decay, has had the decency of not troubling with his dotages persons of not near your ladyship's youth and vivacity. I have long been of opinion that few persons know *when* to die; I am not so English as to mean when to dispatch themselves—no, but when to go out of the world. I have usually applied this opinion to those who have made a considerable figure, and consequently it was not adapted to myself. Yet even we cyphers ought not to fatigue the public scene when we are become lumber. Thus, being quite out of the question, I will explain my maxim, which is the more wholesome, the higher it is addressed. My opinion, then, is, that when any personage has shewn as much as is possible in his or her best walk (and, not to repeat both genders every minute, I will use the male as the common of the two), he should take up his Strulbrugism, and be heard of no more. Instances will be still more explanatory. Voltaire ought to have pretended to die after *Alzire*, Mahomet, and Semiramis, and not to have produced his wretched last pieces. Lord Chatham should have closed his political career with his immortal war. And how weak was Garrick, when he had quitted the stage, to limp after the tatters of fame, by writing and reading pitiful poems, and even by *sitting* to read plays which he had acted with such fire and energy? We have another example in Mr. Anstey; who, if he had a friend upon earth, would have been obliged to him for being knocked on the head the moment he had published the *first* edition of the Bath Guide; for even in the second he had exhausted his whole stock of inspiration, and has never written any thing

tolerable since. When such unequal authors print their works together, one may apply in a new light the old harked simile of Mezentius, who tied together the living and the dead.

We have just received the works of an author, from whom I find I am to receive much less entertainment than I expected, because I shall have much less to read than I intended. His memoirs, I am told, are almost wholly military, which, therefore, I shall not read; and his poetry, I am sure, I shall not look at, because I should understand it. What I saw of it formerly convinced me, that he would not have been a poet, even if he had written in his own language; and, though I do not understand German, I am told it is a fine language; and I can easily believe that any tongue (not excepting our old barbarous Saxon, which, a bit of an antiquary as I am, I abhor) is more harmonious than French. It was curious absurdity, therefore, to pitch on the most unpoetic language in Europe, the most barren, and the most clogged with difficulties. I have heard Russian and Polish sung, and both sounded musical; but to abandon one's own tongue, and not adopt Italian, that is even sweeter, and softer, and more copious than the Latin, was a want of taste that I should think could not be applauded even by a Frenchman born in Provence. But what a language is the French, which measures verses by feet that never are to be pronounced, which is the case wherever the mute *c* is found! What poverty of various sounds for rhyme, when, lest similar cadences should too often occur, their mechanic bards are obliged to marry masculine and feminine terminations as alternately as the black and white squares of a chess-board! Nay, will you believe me, madam?—yes, you will; for you may convince your own eyes, that a scene of *Zaire* begins with three of the most nasal adverbs that ever snorted together in a breath. *Enfin, donc, désormais*, are the culprits in question. *Enfin donc*, need I tell your ladyship, that the author I alluded to at the beginning of this long tirade is the late king of Prussia.

I am conscious that I have taken a little liberty when I excommunicate a tongue in which your ladyship has condescended to write; but I only condemn it for verse and pieces of eloquence, of

which I thought it alike incapable, till I read Rousseau of Geneva. It is a most sociable language, and charming for narrative and epistles. Yet, write as well as you will in it, you must be liable to express yourself better in the speech natural to you; and your own country has a right to understand all your works, and is jealous of their not being as perfect as you could make them. Is it not more creditable to be translated into a foreign language than into your own? and will it not vex you to hear the translation taken for the original, and to find vulgarisms that you could not have committed yourself? But I have done, and will release you, madam; only observing, that you flatter me with a vain hope when you tell me you shall return to England some time or other. Where will that time be for me?—and, when it arrives, shall not I be somewhere else?

I do not pretend to send your ladyship English news, nor to tell you of English literature. You must, before this time, have heard of the dismal state into which our chief personage is fallen! That consideration absorbs all others. The two houses are going to settle some intermediate succedaneum, and *the obvious one*, no doubt, will be fixed on.

This letter, I hope, will be more fortunate than my last. I should be very unhappy to seem again ungrateful, when I have the honour of being, with the greatest respect, madam, &c. &c.

LETTER XLVI.

The Earl of Orford to Mrs. H. More.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 1, 1792.

My much-esteemed friend,
I HAVE not so long delayed answering your letter from the pitiful revenge of recollecting how long your pen is fetching breath before it replies to mine. Oh! no; you know I love to *heap coals of kindness* on your head, and to draw you into little sins, that you may forgive yourself, by knowing your time was employed on big virtues. On the contrary, you would be revenged; for here have you, according to *your* notions, inveigled me into the fracture of a commandment; for I am writing to you on a *Sunday*, being the first moment of leisure that I have had since I received your letter. It

does not, indeed, clash with my religious ideas, as I hold paying one's debts as good a deed as praying and reading sermons for a whole day in every week, when it is impossible to fix the attention to one course of thinking for so many hours for fifty-two days in every year. Thus, you see, I can preach too. But seriously—and indeed I am little disposed to cheerfulness now—I am overwhelmed with troubles and with business—and business that I do not understand. Law, and the management of a ruined estate, are subjects ill suited to a head, that never studied any thing that in worldly language is called useful. The tranquillity of my remnant of life will be lost, or so perpetually interrupted, that I expect little comfort; not that I am already intending to grow rich, but the moment one is supposed so, there are so many alert to turn one to their own account, that I have more letters to write to satisfy, or rather to dissatisfy them, than about my own affairs, though the latter are all confusion. I have such missives, on agriculture, pretensions to livings, offers of taking care of my game, as I am incapable of it, self-recommendations of making my robes, and round hints of taking out my writ, that at least I may name a proxy, and give my dormant conscience to somebody or other! I trust you think better of my heart and understanding than to suppose that I have listened to any one of these new *friends*. Yet, though I have negatived all, I have been forced to answer some of them before you; and that will convince you how cruelly ill I have passed my time lately, besides having been made ill with vexation and fatigue. But I am tolerably well again.

For the other empty metamorphosis that has happened to the outward man*, you do me justice in concluding that it can do nothing but tease me; it is being called names in one's old age. I had rather be my lord mayor, for then I should keep the nickname but a year, and mine I may retain a little longer; not that at seventy-five I reckon on becoming my lord Methusalem.

Vainer, however, I believe I am already become; for I have wasted almost

* His accession to his title. This is the last letter but one signed Horace Walpole; and that one follows it, being without date or other internal evidence of the time it was written.

two pages about myself, and said not a tittle about your health, which I most cordially rejoice to hear you are recovering, and as fervently hope you will entirely recover. I have the highest opinion of the element of water as a constant beverage, having so deep a conviction of the goodness and wisdom of Providence, that I am persuaded, that when it indulged us in such a luxurious variety of eatables, and gave us but one drinkable, it intended that our sole liquid should be both wholesome and corrective. Your system, I know, is different. You hold that mutton and water were the only cock and hen that were designed for our nourishment; but I am apt to doubt whether draughts of water for six weeks are capable of restoring health, though some are strongly impregnated with mineral and other particles. Yet you have staggered me: the Bath water, by your account, is like electricity, compounded of contradictory qualities; the one attracts and repels; the other turns a shilling yellow, and whitens your jaundice. I shall hope to see you (when is that to be?) without alloy.

I must finish, wishing you three hundred and thirteen days of happiness for the new year that is arrived this morning: the fifty-two that you hold in commendam, I have no doubt, will be rewarded as such good intentions deserve.

Adieu, my *too* good friend! My direction shall talk superciliously to the postman*: but do let me continue, unchangedly, your faithful and sincere, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

The Earl of Orford to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, June 13, 1793.

I THANK you much for all your information—some parts made me smile: yet, if what you heard of **** proves true, I rather think it deplorable! How can love of money, or the still vainer of all vanities, ambition of wearing a high but most insignificant office, which even poor lord ***** could execute, tempt a very old man, who loves his ease and his own

* He means franking his letter by his newly acquired title of earl of Orford.

way, to stoop to wait like a footman behind a chair, for hours, and in a court whence he had been cast ignominiously? I believe I have more pride than most men alive: I could be flattered by honours acquired by merit, or by some singular action of *cclat*; but for titles, ribbands, offices of no business, which any body can fill, and must be given to many, I should just as soon be proud of being the top 'squire in a country village. It is only worse to have waded to distinction through dirt, like lord ****.

All this shifting of scenes may, as you say, be food to the *Fronde*—*Sed defendit numerus*. It is perfectly ridiculous to use any distinction of parties but the *ins* and the *outs*. Many years ago I thought that the wisest appellations for contending factions, ever assumed, were those in the Roman empire, who called themselves *the greens and the blues*: it was so easy, when they changed sides, to slide from one colour to the other—and then a blue might plead that he had never been *true blue*, but always a *greenish blue*; and *vice versa*.

I allow that the steadiest party man may be staggered by novel and unforeseen circumstances. The outrageous proceedings of the French republicans have wounded the cause of liberty, and will, I fear, have shaken it for centuries; for Condorcet, and such fiends, are worse than the imperial and royal dividers of Poland. But I do not see why detestation of anarchy and assassination must immediately make one fall in love with garters and seals.

I am sitting by the fire, as I have done ever since I came hither; and, since I do not expect warm weather in June, I am wishing for rain, or I shall not have a mouthful of hay, nor a noseful of roses. Indeed, as I have seen several fields of hay cut, I wonder it has not brought rain, as usual. My creed is, that rain is good for hay, as I conclude every climate and its productions are suited to each other. Providence did not trouble itself about its being more expensive to us to make our hay over and over; it only took care it should not want water enough. Adieu!

LETTER XLVIII.

The Earl of Orford to Wm. Roscoe, Esq.

Berkeley Square, April 4, 1795.

To judge of my satisfaction and gratitude, on receiving the very acceptable present of your book*, sir, you should have known my extreme impatience for it from the instant Mr. Edwards had kindly favoured me with the first chapters. You may consequently conceive the mortification I felt at not being able to thank you immediately, both for the volume and the obliging letter that accompanied it, by my right arm and hand being swelled, and rendered quite immoveable and useless, of which you will perceive the remains, if you can read these lines which I am forcing myself to write, not without pain, the first moment I have power to hold a pen; and it will cost me some time, I believe, before I can finish my whole letter, earnest as I am, sir, to give a loose to my gratitude.

If you ever had the pleasure of reading such a delightful book as your own, imagine, sir, what a comfort it must be to receive such an anodyne in the midst of a fit of the gout, that has already lasted above nine weeks, and which at first I thought might carry me to Lorenzo de Medici, before he should come to me!

The complete volume has more than answered the expectations which the sample had raised. The Grecian simplicity of the style is preserved throughout; the same judicious candour reigns in every page; and, without allowing yourself that liberty of indulging your own bias towards good or against criminal characters, which over-rigid critics prohibit, your artful candour compels your readers to think with you, without seeming to take a part yourself. You have shown, from his own virtues, abilities, and heroic spirit, why Lorenzo deserved to have Mr. Roscoe for his biographer. And since you have been so, sir (for he was not completely known before, at least not out of Italy), I shall be extremely mistaken if he is not henceforth allowed to be, in various lights, one of the most excellent and greatest men with whom we are well acquainted, especially if we reflect on the shortness of

his life, and the narrow sphere in which he had to act. Perhaps I ought to blame my own ignorance, that I did not know Lorenzo as a beautiful poet: I confess I did not. Now I do, I own I admire some of his sonnets more than several—yes, even of Petrarch; for Lorenzo's are frequently more clear, less *alambiqués*, and not inharmonious, as Petrarch's often are, from being too crowded with words, for which room is made by numerous elisions, which prevent the softening alternacy of vowels and consonants. That thicket of words was occasioned by the embarrassing nature of the sonnet—a form of composition I do not love, and which is almost intolerable in any language but Italian, which furnishes such a profusion of rhymes. To our tongue the sonnet is mortal, and the parent of insipidity. The imitation in some degree of it was extremely noxious to a true poet, our Spenser; and he was the more injudicious, by lengthening his stanza, in a language so barren of rhymes as ours, and in which several words, whose terminations are of similar sounds, are so rugged, uncouth, and unmusical. The consequence was, that many lines which he forced into the service, to complete the quota of his stanza, are unmeaning, or silly, or tending to weaken the thought he would express.

Well, sir, but if you have led me to admire the compositions of Lorenzo, you have made me intimate with another poet of whom I had never heard, nor had the least suspicion; and who, though writing in a less harmonious language than Italian, outshines an able master of that country, as may be estimated by the fairest of all comparisons, which is, when one of each nation versifies the same ideas and thoughts.

That novel poet I boldly pronounce is Mr. Roscoe. Several of his translations of Lorenzo are superior to the originals, and the verses more poetic; nor am I bribed to give this opinion by the present of your book, nor by any partiality, nor by the surprise of finding so pure a writer of history as able a poet. Some good judges to whom I have shewn your translations entirely agree with me.

I will name one most competent judge, Mr. Hoole, so admirable a poet himself, and such a critic in Italian, as he has proved by a translation of Ariosto.

That I am not flattering you, sir, I

* The Life of Lorenzo de Medici.

will demonstrate ; for I am not satisfied with one essential line in your version of the most beautiful, I think, of all Lorenzo's stanzas. It is his description of jealousy, in page 268, equal, in my humble opinion, to Dryden's delineations of the passions, and the last line of which is—

Mai dorme, ed ostinata a se sol crede.

The thought to me is quite new, and your translation, I own, does not come up to it. Mr. Hoole and I hammered at it, but could not content ourselves. Perhaps, by altering your last couplet, you may enclose the whole sense, and make it equal to the preceding six.

I will not ask your pardon, sir, for taking so much liberty with you. You have displayed so much candour and so much modesty, and are so free from pretensions, that I am confident you will allow, that truth is the sole ingredient that ought to compose deserved incense ; and if ever commendation was sincere, no praise ever flowed with purer veracity than all I have said in this letter does from the heart of, sir, your infinitely obliged humble servant.

LETTER XLIX.

*The Earl of Orford to the Countess of ****.*

Jan. 13, 1797.

My dear madam,
You distress me infinitely by shewing my idle notes, which I cannot conceive can amuse any body. My old-fashioned breeding impels me every now and then to reply to the letters you honour me with writing ; but in truth very unwillingly, for I seldom can have any thing particular to say ; I scarce go out of my own house, and then only to two or three very private places, where I see nobody that really knows any thing—and what I learn comes from newspapers, that collect intelligence from coffee-houses—consequently, what I neither believe nor report. At home I see only a few charitable elders, except about fourscore nephews and nieces of various ages, who are each brought to me once a year, to stare at me as the Methusalem of the family ; and they can only speak of their own contemporaries, which interest me

no more than if they talked of their dolls, or bats and balls. Must not the result of all this, madam, make me a very entertaining correspondent ?—and can such letters be worth shewing ?—or can I have any spirit, when so old and reduced, to dictate ? Oh, my good madam, dispense with me from such a task, and think how it must add to it to apprehend such letters being shewn. Pray send me no more such laurels, which I desire no more than their leaves when decked with a scrap of tinsel, and stuck on twelfth-cakes, that lie on the shopboards of pastry-cooks at Christmas. I shall be quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust*. Till then, pray, madam, accept the resignation of your ancient servant.

FROM THE

LETTERS OF DR. FRANKLIN.

LETTER L.

Dr. Franklin to George Whitfield†.

Philadelphia, June 6, 1753.

'Sir,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 2d instant, and am glad to hear that you increase in strength. I hope you will continue mending till you recover your former health and firmness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has.

As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of more service to you‡. But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round, for mankind are all of a family.

For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favours, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since

* Lord Orford died in little more than six weeks after the date of this letter.

† One of the founders of the Methodists.

‡ Dr. Franklin had relieved Mr. Whitfield in a paralytic case, by the application of electricity.

my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men I can therefore only return on their fellow-men; and I can only shew my gratitude for these mercies from God by a readiness to help his other children, and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree and eternal in duration: I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those, who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed, imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world are rather from God's goodness than our merit; how much more such happiness of heaven!

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world: I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works than I have generally seen it: I mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit; not holiday-keeping, sermon-reading, or hearing; performing church ceremonies or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons are useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produced any fruit.

Your great Master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word to the mere *hearers*; the son, that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands, to him that professed his readiness but neglected

the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry Lord! Lord! who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected. He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; which implied his modest opinion, that there were some in his time who thought themselves so good, that they need not hear even him for improvement; but now-a-days we have scarce a little parson that does not think it the duty of every man within his reach to sit under his petty ministrations, and that whoever omits them offends God. I wish to such more humility, and to you health and happiness, being your friend and servant.

LETTER LI.

Dr. Franklin to Miss Stevenson at Wanstead.

Craven Street, May 16, 1760.

I SEND my good girl the books I mentioned to her last night. I beg her to accept of them as a small mark of my esteem and friendship. They are written in the familiar, easy manner for which the French are so remarkable; and afford a good deal of philosophic and practical knowledge, unembarrassed with the dry mathematics, used by more exact reasoners, but which is apt to discourage young beginners.

I would advise you to read with a pen in your hand, and enter in a little book short hints of what you find that is curious, or that may be useful; for this will be the best method of imprinting such particulars in your memory, where they will be ready, either for practice on some future occasion, if they are matters of utility, or at least to adorn and improve your conversation, if they are rather points of curiosity. And as many of the terms of science are such as you cannot have met with in your

common reading, and may therefore be unacquainted with, I think it would be well for you to have a good dictionary at hand, to consult immediately when you meet with a word you do not comprehend the precise meaning of. This may at first seem troublesome and interrupting; but it is a trouble that will daily diminish, as you will daily find less and less occasion for your dictionary, as you become more acquainted with the terms; and in the mean time you will read with more satisfaction, because with more understanding. When any point occurs, in which you would be glad to have farther information than your book affords you, I beg you would not in the least apprehend, that I should think it a trouble to receive and answer your questions. It will be a pleasure, and no trouble. For though I may not be able, out of my own little stock of knowledge, to afford you what you require, I can easily direct you to the books where it may most readily be found. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately.

LETTER LII.

Dr. Franklin to John Alleyne, Esq.

Craven Street, August 9, 1768.

Dear Jack,

You desire, you say, my impartial thoughts on the subject of an early marriage, by way of answer to the numberless objections, that have been made by numerous persons to your own. You may remember, when you consulted me on the occasion, that I thought youth on both sides to be no objection. Indeed, from the marriages that have fallen under my observation, I am rather inclined to think, that early ones stand the best chance of happiness. The temper and habits of the young are not yet become so stiff and uncomplying as when more advanced in life: they form more easily to each other, and hence many occasions of disgust are removed. And if youth has less of that prudence, which is necessary to manage a family, yet the parents and elder friends of young married persons are generally at hand to afford their advice, which amply supplies that defect; and by early marriage youth is sooner formed to regular and

useful life; and possibly some of those accidents or connections, that might have injured the constitution, or reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented. Particular circumstances of particular persons may possibly sometimes make it prudent to delay entering into that state; but in general, when nature has rendered our bodies fit for it, the presumption is in nature's favour, that she has not judged amiss in making us desire it. Late marriages are often attended, too, with this farther inconvenience, that there is not the same chance that the parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "Late children," says the Spanish proverb, "are early orphans." A melancholy reflection to those whose case it may be. With us, in America, marriages are generally in the morning of life; our children are therefore educated and settled in the world by noon; and thus, our business being done, we have an afternoon and evening of cheerful leisure to ourselves; such as our friend at present enjoys. By these early marriages we are blessed with more children; and from the mode among us, founded by nature, of every mother suckling and nursing her own child, more of them are raised. Thence the swift progress of population among us, unparalleled in Europe. In fine, I am glad you are married, and congratulate you most cordially upon it. You are now in the way of becoming a useful citizen; and you have escaped the unnatural state of celibacy for life—the fate of many here, who never intended it, but who, having too long postponed the change of their condition, find, at length, that it is too late to think of it, and so live all their lives in a situation that greatly lessens a man's value. An odd volume of a set of books bears not the value of its proportion to the set: what think you of the odd half of a pair of scissors? it can't well cut any thing; it may possibly serve to scrape a trencher.

Pray make my compliments and best wishes acceptable to your bride. I am old and heavy, or I should ere this have presented them in person. I shall make but small use of the old man's privilege, that of giving advice to younger friends. Treat your wife always with respect; it will procure respect to you, not only from her, but from all that observe it.

Never use a slighting expression to her, even in jest; for slights in jest, after frequent bandyings, are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy. Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least you will, by such conduct, stand the best chance for such consequences. I pray God to bless you both; being ever your affectionate friend.

LETTER LIII.

Dr. Franklin to Governor Franklin,
New Jersey.*

London, August 19, 1772

* * * In yours of May 14, you acquaint me with your indisposition, which gave me great concern. The resolution you have taken to use more exercise is extremely proper; and I hope you will steadily perform it. It is of the greatest importance to prevent diseases, since the cure of them by physic is so very precarious. In considering the different kinds of exercise, I have thought that the *quantum* of each is to be judged of, not by time or by distance, but by the degree of warmth it produces in the body: thus, when I observe if I am cold when I get into a carriage in a morning, I may ride all day without being warmed by it; that if on horseback my feet are cold, I may ride some hours before they become warm; but if I am ever so cold on foot, I cannot walk an hour briskly, without glowing from head to foot by the quickened circulation: I have been ready to say (using round numbers without regard to exactness, but merely to make a great difference), that there is more exercise in *one* mile's riding on horseback than in *five* in a coach; and more in *one* mile's walking on foot than in *five* on horseback; to which I may add, that there is more in walking *one* mile up and down stairs, than in *five* on a level floor. The two latter exercises may be had within doors, when the weather discourages going abroad; and the last may be had when one is pinched for time, as containing a great quantity

* Dr. Franklin's son, to whom the first part of the Memoirs of his Life is addressed.

of exercise in a handful of minutes. The dumb bell is another exercise of the latter compendious kind; by the use of it I have in forty swings quickened my pulse from sixty to one hundred beats in a minute, counted by a second watch; and I suppose the warmth generally increases with quickness of pulse.

LETTER LIV.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Priestley.

London, September 19, 1772.

Dear sir,

In the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice, I cannot, for want of sufficient premises, counsel you *what* to determine; but if you please, I will tell you *how*. When those difficult cases occur, they are difficult chiefly because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons *pro* and *con* are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves; and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us. To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns: writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con*; then during three or four days' consideration, I put down, under the different heads, short hints of the different motives that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in *one* view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights, and where I find two (one on each side), that seem equal, I strike them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some *two* reasons *con*, I strike out the *three*. If I judge some *two* reasons *con* equal to some *three* reasons *pro*, I strike out the *five*; and thus proceeding, I find at length where the *balance* lies; and if after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of importance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And though the weight of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities, yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge

better, and am less liable to make a rash step; and in fact I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral or prudential algebra*.

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LV.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Thomas, at Lisle.

Paris, Feb. 8, 1777.

You are too early, *hussy*, as well as too saucy, in calling me *rebel*; you should wait for the event, which will determine whether it is a *rebellion* or only a *revolution*. Here the ladies are more civil; they call us *les Insurgens*; a character that usually pleases them: and methinks all other women who smart, or have smarted under the tyranny of a bad husband, ought to be fixed in *revolution* principles, and act accordingly.

In my way to Canada last spring, I saw dear Mrs. Barrow, at New York. Mr. Barrow had been from her two or three months to keep Governor Tryon, and other tories, company on board the *Asia*, one of the king's ships which lay in the harbour; and in all that time that naughty man had not ventured once on shore to see her. Our troops were then pouring into the town, and she was packing up to leave it, fearing, as she had a large house, they would incommode her, by quartering officers in it. As she appeared in great perplexity, scarce knowing where to go, I persuaded her to stay; and I went to the general officers then commanding there, and recommended her to their protection; which they promised and performed. On my return from Canada, where I was a piece of a governor (and I think a very good one) for a fortnight, and might have been so till this time, if your wicked army, enemies to all good government, had not come and driven me out, I found her still in quiet possession of her house. I inquired how our people had behaved to her; she spoke in high terms of the respectful attention they had paid her, and the quiet and security they had procured her. I said I was glad of it; and that if they had used her ill, I would have turned tory. Then, said she (with that pleasing gaiety

so natural to her), *I wish they had*. For you must know she is a *torycess* as well as you, and can as flippantly call *rebel*. I drank tea with her; we talked affectionately of you and our other friends the Wilkes's, of whom she had received no late intelligence: what became of her since, I have not heard. The street she lived in was some months after chiefly burnt down; but as the town was then, and ever since has been, in possession of the king's troops, I have had no opportunity of knowing whether she suffered any loss in the conflagration. I hope she did not, as if she did, I should wish I had not persuaded her to stay there. I am glad to learn from you, that that unhappy, though deserving family, the W.'s, are getting into some business that may afford them subsistence. I pray that God will bless them, and that they may see happier days. Mr. Cheap's and Dr. H.'s good fortunes please me. Pray learn, if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other people's pleasures, and happy with their happiness, when none occur of your own; then perhaps you will not so soon be weary of the place you chance to be in, and so fond of rambling to get rid of your *ennui*. I fancy you have hit upon the right reason of your being weary of St. Omers, *viz.* that you are out of temper, which is the effect of full living and idleness. A month in Bridewell, beating hemp, upon bread and water, would give you health and spirits, and subsequent cheerfulness and contentment, with every other situation. I prescribe that regimen for you, my dear, in pure good-will, without a fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the price of living in either of those places; but I am sure a single woman, as you are, might with economy upon two hundred pounds a-year maintain herself comfortably any where; and me into the bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse. Present my respects to Mrs. Payne, and Mrs. Heathcot; for though I have not the honour of knowing them, yet as you say they are friends to the American cause, I am sure they must be women of good understanding.

I know you wish you could see me, but as you can't, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin grey straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap; which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear, among the powdered heads of Paris! I wish every lady and gentleman in France would only be so obliging as to follow my fashion, comb their own heads as I do mine, dismiss their *friseurs*, and pay me half the money they pay to them. You see the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist these *friseurs* (who are at least 100,000), and with the money I would maintain them, make a visit with them to England, and dress the heads of your ministers and privy counsellors; which I conceive at present to be *un peu dérangées*. Adieu! madcap; and believe me ever your affectionate friend and humble servant.

P.S. Don't be proud of this long letter. A fit of the gout, which has confined me five days, and made me refuse to see company, has given me a little time to trifle; otherwise it would have been very short. visitors and business would have interrupted: and perhaps, with Mrs. Barrow, you wish they had.

LETTER LVI.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Cooper, Boston.

Paris, May 1, 1777.

I THANK you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival here, and for your good wishes. I am, as you supposed, treated with great civility and respect by all orders of people; but it gives me still greater satisfaction to find that our being here is of some use to our country. On that head I cannot be more explicit at present.

I rejoice with you in the happy change of affairs in America last winter: I hope the same train of success will continue through the summer. Our enemies are disappointed in the number of additional troops they purposed to send over. What they have been able to muster will not probably recruit their

army to the state it was in the beginning of last campaign; and ours I hope will be equally numerous, better armed, and better clothed, than they have been heretofore.

All Europe is on our side of the question, as far as applause and good wishes can carry them. Those who live under arbitrary power do nevertheless approve of liberty, and wish for it: they almost despair of recovering it in Europe; they read the translations of our separate colony constitutions with rapture; and there are such numbers everywhere who talk of removing to America, with their families and fortunes, as soon as peace and our independence shall be established, that it is generally believed we shall have a prodigious addition of strength, wealth, and arts, from the emigrations of Europe; and it is thought, that to lessen or prevent such emigrations, the tyrannies established here must relax, and allow more liberty to their people. Hence it is a common observation here, that our cause is the *cause of all mankind*; and that we are fighting for their liberty in defending our own. It is a glorious task assigned us by providence; which has, I trust, given us spirit and virtue equal to it, and will at last crown it with success.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LVII.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Price, London.

Passy, February 6, 1780.

Dear sir,

I RECEIVED but very lately your kind favour of October 14th, Dr. Ingenhausz, who brought it, having staid long in Holland. I sent that enclosed directly to Mr. L. It gave me great pleasure to understand that you continue well. Your writings, after all the abuse you and they have met with, begin to make serious impressions on those who at first rejected the counsels you gave; and they will acquire new weight every day, and be in high esteem when the cavils against them are dead and forgotten. Please to present my affectionate respects to that honest, sensible, and intelligent society*, who did me so long the honour of admitting me to

* Supposed to allude to a club at the London coffee house.

share in their instructive conversations. I never think of the hours I so happily spent in that company, without regretting that they are never to be repeated; for I see no prospect of an end to this unhappy war in my time. Dr. Priestley, you tell me, continues his experiments with success. We make daily great improvements in *natural*—there is one I wish to see in *moral* philosophy; the discovery of a plan that would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cutting one another's throats. When will human reason be sufficiently improved to see the advantage of this? When will men be convinced, that even successful wars at length become misfortunes to those who unjustly commenced them, and who triumphed blindly in their success, not seeing all its consequences? Your great comfort and mine in this war is, that we honestly and faithfully did every thing in our power to prevent it. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Dr. Franklin to General Washington.

Passy, March 5, 1780.

Sir,

I HAVE received but lately the letter your excellency did me the honour of writing to me in recommendation of the Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own hands. We became acquainted; however, from the time of his arrival at Paris; and his zeal for the honour of our country, his activity in our affairs here, and his firm attachment to our cause, and to you, impressed me with the same regard and esteem for him that your excellency's letter would have done had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another campaign or two, and afford us a little leisure, I should be happy to see your excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my age and strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous kingdoms. You would, on this side the sea, enjoy the great reputation you have acquired, pure and free from those little shades that the jealousy and envy of a man's

countrymen and cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what posterity will say of Washington. For a thousand leagues have nearly the same effect as a thousand years. The feeble voice of those grovelling passions cannot extend so far either in time or distance. At present I enjoy that pleasure for you: as I frequently hear the old generals of this martial country (who study the maps of America, and mark upon them all your operations) speak with sincere approbation and great applause of your conduct; and join in giving you the character of one of the greatest captains of the age.

I must soon quit the scene, but you may live to see our country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the war is over; like a field of young Indian corn, which long fair weather and sunshine had enfeebled and discoloured, and which, in that weak state, by a thunder gust of violent wind, hail, and rain, seemed to be threatened with absolute destruction; yet the storm being past, it recovers fresh verdure, shoots up with double vigour, and delights the eye not of its owner only, but of every observing traveller.

The best wishes that can be formed for your health, honour, and happiness, ever attend you, from yours, &c.

LETTER LIX.

Dr. Franklin to Mr. Small, Paris.

Passy, July 22, 1780.

You see, my dear sir, that I was not afraid my masters would take it amiss if I ran to see an old friend, though in the service of their enemy. They are reasonable enough to allow, that differing politics should not prevent the intercommunication of philosophers, who study and converse for the benefit of mankind. But you have doubts about coming to dine with me. I suppose you will not venture it; your refusal will not indeed do so much honour to your generosity and good-nature of your government, as to your sagacity. You know your people, and I do not expect you. I think too that in friendship I ought not to make you more visits, as I

intended: but I send my grandson to pay his duty to his physician.

You inquired about my gout, and I forgot to acquaint you, that I had treated it a little cavalierly in its two last accesses. Finding one night that my foot gave me more pain after it was covered warm in bed, I put it out of bed naked; and perceiving it easier, I let it remain longer than I at first designed, and at length fell asleep, leaving it there till morning. The pain did not return, and I grew well. Next winter, having a second attack, I repeated the experiment; not with such immediate success in dismissing the gout, but constantly with the effect of rendering it less painful, so that it permitted me to sleep every night. I should mention, that it was my son* who gave me the first intimation of this practice. He being in the old opinion, that the gout was to be drawn out by transpiration. And having heard me say, that perspiration was carried on more copiously when the body was naked than when clothed, he put his foot out of bed to increase that discharge, and found ease by it, which he thought a confirmation of the doctrine. But this method requires to be confirmed by more experiments, before one can conscientiously recommend it. I give it you, however, in exchange for your receipt of tartar emetic, because the commerce of philosophy as well as other commerce, is best promoted by taking care to make returns. I am ever, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LX.

Dr. Franklin to Miss Georgiana Shipley†.

Passy, October 8, 1780.

It is long, very long, my dear friend, since I had the great pleasure of hearing from you, and receiving any of your very pleasing letters. But it is my fault. I have long omitted my part of the correspondence. Those who love to receive letters should write letters. I wish I could safely promise an amendment of that fault. But besides the indolence attending age, and growing

upon us with it, my time is engrossed by too much business, and I have too many inducements to postpone doing, what I feel I ought to do for my own sake, and what I can never resolve to omit entirely.

Your translations from Horace, as far as I can judge of poetry and translations, are very good. That of the *Quo quo ruitis* is so suitable to the times, that the conclusion (in your version) seems to threaten like a prophecy; and methinks there is at least some appearance of danger that it may be fulfilled. I am unhappily an enemy, yet I think there has been enough of blood spilt, and I wish what is left in the veins of that once loved people, may be spared, by a peace solid and everlasting.

It is a great while since I heard any thing of the *good bishop*. Strange, that so simple a character should sufficiently distinguish one of that sacred body! *Donnez-moi de ses nouvelles*. I have been some time flattered with the expectation of seeing the countenance of that most honoured and ever-beloved friend, delineated by your pencil. The portrait is said to have been long on the way, but is not yet arrived: nor can I hear where it is.

Indolent as I have confessed myself to be, I could not, you see, miss this good and safe opportunity of sending you a few lines, with my best wishes for your happiness, and that of the whole dear and amiable family in whose sweet society I have spent so many happy hours. Mr. Jones‡ tells me he shall have a pleasure in being the bearer of my letter, of which I make no doubt: I learn from him, that to your drawing, and music, and painting, and poetry, and Latin, you have added a proficiency in chess; so that you are, as the French say, *remplie de talents*. May they and you fall to the lot of one that shall duly value them, and love you as much as I do! Adieu.

‡ Afterwards sir William Jones, who married the bishop of St. Asaph's eldest daughter, Anna Maria Shipley.

* Governor Franklin.

† Daughter of Dr. Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph.

LETTER LXI.

Dr. Franklin to the Rev. William Nixon.

Passy, Sept. 5, 1781.

Rev. sir,

I DULY received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 25th past, together with the valuable little book, of which you are the author. There can be no doubt but that a gentleman of your learning and abilities might make a very useful member of society in our new country, and meet with encouragement there, either as an instructor in one of our universities, or as a clergyman of the church of Ireland. But I am not empowered to engage any person to go over thither, and my abilities to assist the distressed are very limited. I suppose you will soon be set at liberty in England by the cartel for the exchange of prisoners: in the mean time if *five Louis d'ors* may be of present service to you, please to draw on me for that sum, and your bill shall be paid on sight. Some time or other you may have an opportunity of assisting with an equal sum a stranger who has equal need of it. Do so. By that means you will discharge any obligation you may suppose yourself under to me. Enjoin him to do the same on occasion. By pursuing such a practice, much good may be done with little money. Let kind offices go round: mankind are all of a family. I have the honour to be, rev. sir, &c.

LETTER LXII.

Dr. Franklin to Edmund Burke, Esq. M.P.

Passy, Oct. 15, 1781.

Sir,

I RECEIVED but a few days since your very friendly letter of August last, on the subject of General Burgoyne.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time with each other, not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences, it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent those wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them. Mr. Burke always stood high in my esteem; but his affectionate

concern for his friend renders him still more amiable, and makes the honour he does me, of admitting me of the number, still more precious.

I do not think the congress have any wish to persecute General Burgoyne. I never heard till I received your letter that they had recalled him: if they have made such a resolution, it must be, I suppose, a conditional one, to take place in case their offer of exchanging him for Mr. Laurens should not be accepted; - a resolution intended merely to enforce that offer.

I have just received an authentic copy of the resolve containing that offer, and authorizing me to make it. As I have no communication with your ministers, I send it enclosed to you*. If you can find any means of negotiating this business, I am sure the restoring another worthy man to his family and friends, will be an addition to your pleasure. With great and invariable respect and affection, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

LETTER LXIII.

Dr. Franklin to the Rev. Dr. Priestley.

Passy, June 7, 1782.

Dear sir,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 7th of April, also one of the 3d of May. I have always great pleasure in hearing from you, in learning that you are well, and that you continue your experiments. I should rejoice much if I could once more recover the leisure to search with you into the works of nature; I mean the *inanimate*, not the *animate* or moral part of them: the more I discovered of the former, the more I admired them; the more I know of the latter, the more I am disgusted with them. Men, I find to be a sort of beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provoked than reconciled, more disposed to do mischief to each other than to make reparation, and much more easily deceived than undeceived * * * *. A virtuous action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the species were really worth producing or

* Wanting.

preserving; but of this I begin to doubt. I know you have no such doubts, because, in your zeal for their welfare, you are taking a great deal of pains to save their souls. Perhaps as you grow older, you may look upon this as a hopeless project, or an idle amusement, repent of having murdered in mephitic air so many honest, harmless mice, and wish that to prevent mischief you had used boys and girls instead of them. In what light we are viewed by superior beings, may be gathered from a piece of late West India news, which, possibly has not yet reached you. A young angel of distinction being sent down to this world on some business, for the first time, had an old courier-spirit assigned him as a guide: they arrived over the seas of Martinico, in the middle of the long day of obstinate fight between the fleets of Rodney and De Grasse. When, through the clouds of smoke, he saw the fire of the guns, the decks covered with mangled limbs, and bodies dead or dying; the ships sinking, burning, or blown into the air; and the quantity of pain, misery, and destruction, the crews yet alive were thus with so much eagerness dealing round to one another, he turned angrily to his guide, and said, "You blundering blockhead, you are ignorant of your business; you undertook to conduct me to the earth, and you have brought me into hell!" "No, sir," says the guide, "I have made no mistake; this is really the earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more sense, and more of what men (vainly) call humanity."

But to be serious, my dear old friend, I love you as much as ever, and I love all the honest souls that meet at the London Coffee House. I only wonder how it happened that they and my other friends in England came to be such good creatures in the midst of so perverse a generation. I long to see them and you once more, and I labour for peace with more earnestness, that I may again be happy in your sweet society.

I shewed your letter to the Duke de la Rochefaucault, who thinks with me, that the new experiments you have made are extremely curious, and he has given me thereupon a note, which I en-

close, and I request you would furnish me with the answer desired.

Yesterday the *Count du Nord** was at the Academy of Sciences, when sundry experiments were exhibited for his entertainment; among them, one by M. Lavoisier, to shew that the strongest fire we yet know is made in a charcoal blown upon with dephlogisticated air. In a heat so produced, he melted platina presently, the fire being much more powerful than that of the strongest burning mirror. Adieu, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LXIV.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

Passy, June 10, 1782.

I RECEIVED and read the letter from my dear and much respected friend, with infinite pleasure. After so long a silence, and the long continuance of its unfortunate causes, a line from you was a prognostic of happier times approaching, when we may converse and communicate freely, without danger from the malevolence of men enraged by the ill success of their distracted projects.

I long with you for the return of peace, on the general principles of humanity. The hope of being able to pass a few more of my last days happy in the sweet conversations and company I once enjoyed at Twyford†, is a particular motive that adds strength to the general wish, and quickens my industry to procure that best of blessings. After much occasion to consider the folly and mischiefs of a state of warfare, and the little or no advantage obtained even by those nations who have conducted it with the most success, I have been apt to think that there has never been, nor ever will be, any such thing as a *good* war, or a *bad* peace.

You ask if I still relish my old studies? I relish them; but I cannot pursue them. My time is engrossed unhappily with other concerns. I requested of the congress last year my discharge from this public station, that I might enjoy a little leisure in the

* The Grand Duke of Russia, afterwards Emperor Paul I.

† The country residence of the bishop.

evening of a long life of business ; but it was refused me, and I have been obliged to drudge on a little longer.

You are happy as your years come on, in having that dear and most amiable family about you. Four daughters ! how rich ! I have but one, and she necessarily detained from me at a thousand leagues distance. I feel the want of that tender care of me which might be expected from a daughter, and would give the world for one. Your shades are all placed in a row over my fire place, so that I not only have you always in my mind, but constantly before my eyes.

The cause of liberty and America has been greatly obliged to you. I hope you will live long to see that country flourish under its new constitution, which I am sure will give you great pleasure. Will you permit me to express another hope, that now your friends are in power, they will take the first opportunity of shewing the sense they ought to have of your virtues and your merit !

Please to make my best respects acceptable to Mrs. Shipley, and embrace for me tenderly all our dear children. With the utmost esteem, respect, and veneration, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LXV.

Dr. Franklin to Miss Alexander.

Passy, June 24, 1782.

I AM not at all displeased that the thesis and dedication with which we were threatened are blown over, for I dislike much all sorts of mummery. The republic of letters has gained no reputation, whatever else it may have gained, by the commerce of dedications : I never made one, and I never desired that one should be made to me. When I submitted to receive this, it was from the bad habit I have long had of doing every thing that ladies desire me to do : there is no refusing any thing to Madame la Marck, nor to you. I have been to pay my respects to that amiable lady, not merely because it was a compliment due to her, but because I love her, which induces me to excuse her not letting me in ; the same reason I

should have for excusing your faults, if you had any. I have not seen your papa since the receipt of your pleasing letter, so could arrange nothing with him respecting the carriage. During seven or eight days I shall be very busy : after that you shall hear from me, and the carriage shall be at your service. How could you think of writing to me about chimneys and fires, in such weather as this ! Now is the time for the frugal lady you mention to save her wood, obtain *plus de chaleur*, and lay it up against winter, as people do ice against summer. Frugality is an enriching virtue ; a virtue I never could acquire in myself : but I was once lucky enough to find it in a wife, who thereby became a fortune to me. Do you possess it ? If you do, and I were twenty years younger, I would give your father one thousand guineas for you. I know you would be worth more to me as a *ménagère* ; but I am covetous and love good bargains. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately.

LETTER LXVI.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Hewson.

Passy, January 27, 1783.

THE departure of my dearest friend*, which I learn from your last letter, greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this life was one of the principal motives of my proposing to visit England again before my return to America. The last year carried off my friends Dr. Pringle and Dr. Fothergill, and Lord Kaimes and Lord Le Despencer ; this has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the ties I had to that country, and indeed to the world in general, are loosened one by one ; and I shall soon have no attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the eleven books, but lost the time in looking for the first. I wrote with that ; and hope it came to hand. I therein asked your counsel about my coming to England : on reflection, I think I can, from my knowledge of your prudence,

* Refers to Mrs. Hewson's mother.

foresee what it will be; viz. not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall therefore omit that journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take leave of my friends, and spend a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben* with me, and perhaps may leave him under your care.

At length we are in peace, God be praised; and long, very long may it continue. All wars are follies, very expensive and very mischievous ones: when will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration? Were they to do it even by the cast of a dye, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on, when travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when your children are all at school, make a little party and take a trip hither? I have now a large house, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three friends; and I am but half an hour's drive from Paris.

In looking forward, twenty-five years seem a long period; but in looking back, how short! Could you imagine that it is now full a quarter of a century since we were first acquainted? it was in 1757. During the greatest part of the time I lived in the same house with my dear deceased friend your mother; of course you and I saw and conversed with each other much and often. It is to all our honours, that in all that time we never had among us the smallest misunderstanding. Our friendship has been all clear sunshine, without any the least clouds in its hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you, what I have had too frequent occasions to say to my other remaining old friends, *the fewer we become, the more let us love one another.* Adieu, &c.

LETTER LXVII.

*Dr. Franklin to the Bishop of St. Asaph
(Dr. Shipley.)*

Passy, March 17, 1783.

I RECEIVED with great pleasure my dear and respected friend's letter of the

* Benjamin Franklin Bache, a grandson of Dr. Franklin, by his daughter.

5th instant, as it informed me of the welfare of a family I so much esteem and love.

The clamour against the peace in your parliament would alarm me for its duration, if I were not of opinion with you, that the attack is rather against the minister. I am confident none of the opposition would have made a better peace for England if they had been in his place; at least I am sure that Lord Stormont, who seems loudest in railing at it, is not the man that could have mended it. My reasons I will give you when I have what I hope to have, the great happiness of seeing you once more, and conversing with you. They talk much of their being no *reciprocity* in our treaty: they think nothing then of our passing over in silence the atrocities committed by their troops, and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton burnings and devastation of our fair towns and countries. They have heretofore confessed the war to be unjust, and nothing is plainer in reasoning than that the mischiefs done in an unjust war should be repaired. Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves, as to imagine they have a right to plunder and destroy as much as they please; and then, without satisfying for the injuries they have done, to have peace on equal terms? We were favourable, and did not demand what justice entitled us to. We shall probably be blamed for it by our constituents; and I still think it would be the interest of England voluntarily to offer reparation of those injuries, and effect it as much as may be in her power. But this is an interest she will never see.

Let us now forgive and forget. Let each country seek its advancement in its own internal advantages of arts and agriculture, not in retarding or preventing the prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy country: and England, if she has at length gained wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to her prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable nation. Her great disease at present is the number and enormous salaries and emoluments of office. Avarice and ambition are strong passions, and separately act with great force on the human

mind; but when both are united, and may be gratified in the same object, their violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry men headlong into factious and contentions destructive of all good government. As long therefore as these great emoluments subsist, your parliament will be a stormy sea, and your public councils confounded by private interests. But it requires much public spirit and virtue to abolish them; more perhaps than can now be found in a nation so long corrupted.

LETTER LXVIII.

Dr. Franklin to Sir Joseph Banks.

Passy, July 27, 1783.

Dear sir,

I RECEIVED YOUR very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honoured by your friendly remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public affairs since his being here, to enjoy all the benefit of his conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more leisure, and to spend a part of it in those studies that are much more agreeable to me than political operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cutting throats: for, in my opinion, *there never was a good war, or a bad peace*. What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility! What an extension of agriculture, even to the tops of our mountains; what rivers rendered navigable, or joined by canals; what bridges, aqueducts, new roads, and other public works, edifices, and improvements, rendering England a complete paradise, might not have been obtained by spending those millions in doing good, which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief; in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

I am pleased with the late astronomical discoveries made by our society. Furnished as all Europe now is with academies of science, with nice instruments and the spirit of experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made, of which we have at present no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known one hundred years hence.

I wish continued success to the labours of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their chair; being with the highest esteem, dear, sir, &c.

Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast globe sent up into the air, much talked of here, and which, if prosecuted, may furnish means of new knowledge.

LETTER LXIX.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Bache.

Passy, Jan. 26, 1784.

My dear child,

Your care in sending me the newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by Captain Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati*. My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance: I only wonder, that, when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the articles of confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the congress or of any particular state, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity from their fellow-citizens, and form an order of *hereditary knights*, in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it, by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribbands and crosses they have seen hanging to the buttonholes of foreign officers. And I suppose those who disapprove of it have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons, who are always exacting

little observances of respect; that "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*"

In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their ribband and badge themselves according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honour on their posterity. For honour, worthily obtained (as that for example of our officers), is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honour does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his learning, his wisdom, or his valour, is promoted by the emperor to the rank of mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction, and good example afforded him by his parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the public. This *ascending* honour is therefore useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending* honour, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meanesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride, and beggary, and idleness, that have half depopulated and decultivated Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage, and neglect in the improvement of estates. I wish therefore that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It would be a good

precedent, and might have good effects. It would also be a kind of obedience to the fifth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honour* our father and mother, but has nowhere directed us to honour our children. And certainly no mode of honouring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual than that of doing praiseworthy actions, which reflect honour on those who gave us our education; or more becoming than that of manifesting, by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions.

But the absurdity of *descending* honours is not a mere matter of philosophical opinion, it is capable of mathematical demonstration. A man's son, for instance, is but half of his family, the other half belonging to the family of his wife. His son, too, marrying into another family, his share in the grandson is but a fourth; in the great grandson, by the same process, it is but an eighth. In the next generation a sixteenth; the next a thirty-second; the next a sixty-fourth; the next an hundred and twenty-eighth; the next a two hundred and fifty-sixth; and the next a five hundred and twelfth: thus in nine generations, which will not require more than three hundred years (no very great antiquity for a family) our present Chevalier of the Order of Cincinnati's share in the then existing knight will be but a five hundred and twelfth part; which, allowing the present certain fidelity of American wives to be insured down through all those nine generations, is so small a consideration, that methinks no reasonable man would hazard, for the sake of it, the disagreeable consequences of the jealousy, envy, and ill-will of his countrymen.

Let us go back with our calculation from this young noble, the five hundred and twelfth part of the present knight, through his nine generations, till we return to the year of the institution. He must have had a father and mother, they are two; each of them had a father and mother, they are four. Those of the next preceding generation will be eight, the next sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and twenty eight, the next two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth in this retrocession five hundred and twelve,

who must be now existing, and all contribute their proportion of this future Chevalier de Cincinnatus. These, with the rest, make together as follows :—

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
Total	1022

One thousand and twenty-two men and women, contributors to the formation of one knight. And if we are to have a thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers, who are to contribute to their production, unless a part of the number are employed in making more knights than one. Let us strike off then the twenty-two thousand on the supposition of this double employ, and then consider, whether, after a reasonable estimation of the number of rogues, and fools, and scoundrels, and prostitutes, that are mixed with, and make up necessarily their million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing set of chevaliers of Cincinnatus. The future genealogists too of these chevaliers, in proving the lineal descent of their honour through so many generations (even supposing honour capable in its nature of descending), will only prove the small share of this honour which can be justly claimed by any one of them, since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear, that, in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honour of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity. I hope, therefore, that the order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves as the knights of the garter, bath, thistle, St. Louis, and other orders of Europe do, with a life enjoyment of their little badge and ribband, and let the distinction

die with those who have merited it. This I imagine will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a convenience, when I go into a company where there may be faces unknown to me, if I discover, by this badge, the persons who merit some particular expression of my respect; and it will save modest virtue the trouble of calling for our regard, by awkward round-about intimations of having been heretofore employed as officers in the continental service.

The gentleman, who made the voyage to France to provide the ribbands and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classical elegance and correctness; and since our nine universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the mottos had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but General Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the *bald eagle**, as looking too much like a *dindon* or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character: he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labour of the fishing hawk; and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case, but like those among men, who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward: the little *king bird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly, and drives him out of the district. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *king-birds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call *chevaliers d'industrie*. I am on this

* The white-headed erne, or bald eagle (*halco leucocephalus*. Linn.), peculiar to North America; and the emblem adopted by the society of Cincinnati.

account not displeased, that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours; the first of the species seen in Europe being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth. He is besides (though a little vain and silly 'tis true, but not the worse emblem for that) a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards, who should presume to invade his farm yard with a *red coat* on.

I shall not enter into the criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may not have the merit of being great scholars, but they undoubtedly merit much as brave soldiers from their country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *fame* for their "*virtutis premium*," which is one of their Latin mottos. Their "*esto perpetua*," another, is an excellent wish, if they meant it for their country; bad, if intended for their order. The states should not only restore to them the *omnia* of their first motto, which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not be suffered to remain with all their new-created chivalry *entirely* in the situation of the gentleman in the story, which their *omnia reliquit* reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some story. He had built a very fine house, and thereby much impaired his fortune. He had a pride however in showing it to his acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remarked a motto over the door, OIA VANITAS. What, says he, is the meaning of OIA? 'tis a word I don't understand. I will tell you, said the gentleman: I had a mind to have the motto cut on a piece of smooth marble, but there was not room for it between the ornaments, to be put in characters large enough to be read. I therefore made use of a contraction anciently very common in Latin manuscripts, whereby the *m's* and *n's* in words are omitted, and the omission noted by a little dash above, which you may see there, so that the word is *omnia*, OMNIA

VANITAS. O, said his friend, I now comprehend the meaning of your motto, it relates to your edifice; and signifies, that if you have abridged your *omnia*, you have nevertheless left your VANITAS legible at full length.

I am, as ever, your affectionate father.

LETTER LXX.

Dr. Franklin to B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, July 26, 1784.

Dear friend,

I HAVE received several letters from you lately, dated June 16, June 30, and July 13. I thank you for the information respecting the proceedings of your West India merchants, or rather planters. The restraints, whatever they may be upon our commerce with your islands, will prejudice their inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us. It is wonderful how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed. Naturally one would imagine, that the interests of a few particulars should give way to general interest. But particulars manage their affairs with so much more application, industry, and address, than the public do theirs, that general interest most commonly gives way to particular. We assemble parliaments and councils to have the benefit of their collected wisdom, but we necessarily have at the same time the inconvenience of their collected passions, prejudices, and private interests. By the help of these, artful men overpower the wisdom, and dupe its possessors; and if we may judge by the acts, decrees, and edicts all the world over for regulating commerce, an assembly of wise men is the greatest fool upon earth. I have received Cook's Voyages, which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some mistake the first volume was omitted, and instead of it a duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good print of Cook I should be glad to have it, being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me pleasure; to receive your account would give me more than all.

I am told that the little pamphlet of *Advice to such as would remove to Ame-*

*rica**, is reprinted in London, with my name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a copy when you have an opportunity of sending it.

Mr. Hartley has long continued here in expectation of instructions for making a treaty of commerce, but they do not come, and I begin to suspect none are intended; though perhaps the delay is only occasioned by the over-great burthen of business at present on the shoulders of your ministers. We do not press the matter, but are content to wait till they can see their interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a treaty.

The conjectures I sent you concerning the cold of last winter still appear to me probable: the moderate season in Russia and Canada does not weaken them. I think our frost here began about the 24th of December, in America the 12th of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had pleasure in his conversation. I wish much to see the new pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the return of your wedding-day, and wish for your sake and Mrs. Vaughan's, that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much: he seems sensible, ingenious, and modest, has a good deal of instruction, and makes judicious remarks. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously.

I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

Dr. Price's pamphlet of Advice to America is a good one, and will do good. You ask "what remedy I have for the growing luxury of my country, which gives so much offence to all *English travellers* without exception?" I answer, that I think it exaggerated, and that travellers are no good judges, whether our luxury is growing or diminishing. Our people are hospitable, and have indeed too much pride in displaying upon their tables before strangers the plenty and variety that our country affords. They have the vanity too of sometimes borrowing one another's plate, to entertain more splendidly. Strangers

being invited from house to house, and meeting every day with a feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary way of living of all the families where they dine; when perhaps each family lives a week after upon the remains of the dinner given. It is, I own, a folly in our people to give *such offence to English travellers*. The first part of the proverb is thereby verified, that *fools make feasts*. I wish in this case the other were as true, and *wise men eat them*. These travellers might, one would think, find some fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive civility to them as strangers.

I have not indeed yet thought of a remedy for luxury: I am not sure that in a great state it is capable of a remedy; nor that the evil is in itself always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all unnecessary expense, and then let us consider, whether laws to prevent such expense are possible to be executed in a great country; and whether, if they could be executed, our people generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the hope of one day being able to purchase and enjoy luxuries a great spur to labour and industry? May not luxury, therefore, produce more than it consumes, if, without such a spur, people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? To this purpose I remember a circumstance. The skipper of a shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service, for which he refused pay. My wife understanding that he had a daughter, sent her as a present a new-fashioned cap. Three years after, this skipper being at my house with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it; but, said he, it proved a dear cap to our congregation. How so? When my daughter appeared in it at meeting, it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia; and my wife and I computed that the whole could not have cost less than one hundred pounds. True, said the farmer, but you do not tell all the story; I think the cap was nevertheless an advantage to us; for it was the first thing that set our girls upon knitting worsted mittens

* See Writings, part iii. Miscellanies, sect. ii.

for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy caps and ribbands there; and you know that that industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater value, and answer better purposes. Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury, since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians by the supply of warm mittens.

In our commercial towns upon the sea coast, fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich will be prudent, live within bounds, and preserve what they have gained for their posterity. Others, fond of showing their wealth, will be extravagant and ruin themselves. Laws cannot prevent this, and perhaps it is not always an evil to the public. A shilling spent idly by a fool may be picked up by a wiser person, who knows better what to do with it: it is therefore not lost. A vain silly fellow builds a fine house, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in a few years ruins himself; but the masons, carpenters, smiths, and other honest tradesmen, have been by his employ assisted in maintaining and raising their families; the farmer has been paid for his labour and encouraged, and the estate is now in better hands. In some cases, indeed, certain modes of luxury may be a public evil, in the same manner as it is a private one. If there be a nation, for instance, that exports its beef and linen to pay for its importations of claret and porter, while a great part of its people live upon potatoes, and wear no shirts, wherein does it differ from the sot, who lets his family starve, and sells his clothes to buy drink? Our American commerce is, I confess, a little in this way. We sell our victuals to your islands for rum and sugar; the substantial necessities of life for its superfluities. But we have plenty and live well nevertheless; though by being soberer we might be richer. by the bye, here is just issued an *arrêt* of council taking off all the duties upon the exportation of brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your rum: in which case there is no doubt but they will be preferred, and we shall be better able to bear your restrictions on our commerce. There are views here, by augmenting

their settlements, of being able to supply the growing people of America with the sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I believe England will get as little by the commercial war she has begun with us as she did by the military. But to return to luxury.

The vast quantity of forest lands we have yet to clear and put in order for cultivation, will for a long time keep the body of our nation laborious and frugal. Forming an opinion of our people and their manners, by what is seen among the inhabitants of the sea ports, is judging from an improper sample. The people of the trading towns may be rich and luxurious, while the country possesses all the virtues that tend to private happiness and public prosperity. Those towns are not much regarded by the country; they are hardly considered as an essential part of the states. And the experience of the last war has shewn, that their being in possession of the enemy did not necessarily draw on the subjection of the country, which bravely continued to maintain its freedom and independence notwithstanding.

It has been computed by some political arithmetician, that if every man and woman would work four hours each day in something useful, that labour would produce sufficient to procure all the necessities and comforts of life; want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and pleasure.

What then occasions so much want and misery? It is the employment of men and women in works that produce neither the necessities nor conveniences of life; who, with those who do nothing, consume the necessities raised by the laborious. To explain this,—

The first elements of wealth are obtained by labour from the earth and waters. I have land, and raise corn; with this I feed a family that does nothing: my corn will be consumed; and at the end of the year I shall be no richer than I was at the beginning. But if, while I feed them, I employ them, some in spinning, others in hewing timber and sawing boards, others in making bricks, &c. for building, the value of my corn will be arrested, and remain with me, and at the end of the year we may all be better clothed and better lodged.

And if, instead of employing a man I feed in making bricks, I employ him in fiddling for me, the corn he eats is gone, and no part of his manufacture remains to augment the wealth and the conveniences of the family. I shall therefore be the poorer for this fiddling man, unless the rest of my family work more or eat less to make up the deficiency he occasions.

Look round the world and see the millions employed in doing nothing, or in something that amounts to nothing, when the necessities and conveniences of life are in question. What is the bulk of commerce, for which we fight and destroy each other, but the toil of millions for superfluities, to the great hazard and loss of many lives by the constant dangers of the sea? How much labour spent in building and fitting great ships to go to China and Arabia for tea and for coffee, to the West Indies for sugar, to America for tobacco! These things cannot be called the necessities of life, for our ancestors lived very comfortably without them.

A question may be asked; could all these people now employed in raising, making, or carrying superfluities, be subsisted by raising necessities? I think they might. The world is large, and a great part of it still uncultivated. Many hundred millions of acres in Asia, Africa, and America, are still forest, and a great deal even in Europe. On one hundred acres of this forest a man might become a substantial farmer, and one hundred thousand men employed in clearing each his one hundred acres (instead of being, as they are, French hair dressers), would hardly brighten a spot big enough to be visible from the moon (unless with Herschell's telescope), so vast are the regions still in the world unimproved.

'Tis however some comfort to reflect, that upon the whole the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind exceeds the quantity of idleness and folly. Hence the increase of good buildings, farms cultivated, and populous cities filled with wealth all over Europe, which a few ages since were only to be found on the coasts of the Mediterranean. And this notwithstanding the mad wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one

year the works of many years' peace. So that we may hope the luxury of a few merchants on the sea coast will not be the ruin of America.

One reflection more, and I will end this long rambling letter. Almost all parts of our bodies require some expense. The feet demand shoes, the legs stockings, the rest of the body clothing, and the belly a good deal of victuals. Our eyes, though exceedingly useful, ask, when reasonable, only the cheap assistance of *spectacles*, which could not much impair our finances. But THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE are the eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine clothes, fine houses, nor fine furniture. Adieu, my dear friend. I am yours ever.

P. S. This will be delivered to you by my grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your civilities and counsels. Please to accept a little present of books I send by him, curious for the beauty of the impression.

LETTER LXXI.

*Dr. Franklin to David Hartley, Esq.
M. P.*

Passy, July 5, 1785.

I CANNOT quit the coasts of Europe without taking leave of my ever dear friend Mr. Hartley. We were long fellow labourers in the best of all works, the work of peace. I leave you still in the field; but having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed!* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening. Adieu! And believe me ever yours most affectionately*.

LETTER LXXII.

*Dr. Franklin to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of
St. Asaph.*

Philadelphia, Feb. 24, 1786.

Dear friend,
I RECEIVED lately your kind letter of November 27. My reception here was, as you have heard, very honourable indeed; but I was betrayed by it and by some remains of ambition, from which

* Written in his 60th year.

I had imagined myself free, to accept of the chair of government for the state of Pennsylvania, when the proper thing for me was repose and a private life. I hope however to be able to bear the fatigue for one year, and then to retire.

I have much regretted our having so little opportunity for conversation when we last met. You could have given me informations and counsels that I wanted; but we were scarce a minute together without being broken in upon. I am to thank you however for the pleasure I had after our parting, in reading the new book you gave me, which I think generally well written and likely to do good; though the reading time of most people is of late so taken up with newspapers and little periodical pamphlets, that few now-a-days venture to attempt reading a quarto volume. I have admired to see, that in the last century a folio, *Burton on Melancholy*, went through six editions in about forty years. We have, I believe, more readers now, but not of such large books.

You seem desirous of knowing what progress we make here in improving our governments. We are I think in the right road of improvement, for we are making experiments. I do not oppose all that seem wrong, for the multitude are more effectually set right by experience, than kept from going wrong by reasoning with them: and I think we are daily more and more enlightened; so that I have no doubt of our obtaining in a few years as much public felicity as good government is capable of affording. Your newspapers are filled with fictitious accounts of anarchy, confusion, distresses and miseries we are supposed to be involved in, as consequences of the revolution; and the few remaining friends of the old government among us take pains to magnify every little inconvenience a change in the course of commerce may have occasioned. To obviate the complaints they endeavour to excite, was written the enclosed little piece*, from which you may form a truer idea of our situation than your own public prints would give you: and I can assure you, that the great body of our nation find themselves happy in the change, and have not the smallest inclination to return to the

domination of Britain. There could not be a stronger proof of the general approbation of the measures that promoted the change, and of the change itself, than has been given by the assembly and council of this state, in the nearly unanimous choice for their governor, of one, who had been so much concerned in those measures; the assembly being themselves the unbribed choice of the people, and therefore may be truly supposed of the same sentiments. I say nearly unanimous, because of between seventy and eighty votes, there were only my own and one other in the negative.

As to my domestic circumstances, of which you kindly desire to hear something, they are at present as happy as I could wish them. I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grandchildren, the eldest of which you have seen, who is now at college in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising both for parts and good dispositions. What their conduct may be when they grow up, and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to see, and I cannot foresee. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence.

He that raises a large family does indeed, while he lives to observe them, stand, as Watts says, *a broader mark for sorrow*; but then he stands a broader mark for pleasure too. When we launch our little fleet of barks into the ocean, bound to different ports, we hope for each a prosperous voyage; but contrary winds, hidden shoals, storms and enemies, come in for a share in the disposition of events; and though these occasion a mixture of disappointment, yet considering the risk where we can make no insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with success. My son's son (Temple Franklin), whom you have also seen, having had a fine farm of six hundred acres conveyed to him by his father when we were at Southampton, has dropped for the present his views of acting in the political line, and applies himself ardently to the study and practice of agriculture. This is much more agreeable to me, who esteem it the most useful, the most independent, and therefore the noblest of

* Uncertain what piece is alluded to.

employments. His lands are on navigable water, communicating with the Delaware, and but about sixteen miles from this city. He has associated to himself a very skilful English farmer lately arrived here, who is to instruct him in the business, and partakes for a term of the profits; so that there is a great apparent probability of their success. You will kindly expect a word or two concerning myself. My health and spirits continue, thanks to God, as when you saw me. The only complaint I then had does not grow worse, and is tolerable. I still have enjoyment in the company of my friends; and being easy in my circumstances, have many reasons to like living. But the course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with less regret, as, having seen during a long life a good deal of this world, I feel a growing curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can cheerfully with filial confidence resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour. Wherever I am, I hope always to retain the pleasing remembrance of your friendship; being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

We all join in respects to Mrs. Shipley, and best wishes for the whole amiable family.

LETTER LXXIII.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Hewson, London.

Philadelphia, May 6, 1786.

My dear friend,
A LONG winter has passed, and I have not had the pleasure of a line from you, acquainting me with your and your children's welfare, since I left England. I suppose you have been in Yorkshire out of the way and knowledge of opportunities; for I will not think you have forgotten me. To make me some amends, I received a few days past a large packet from Mr. Williams, dated September, 1776, near ten years since, containing three letters from you, one

of December 12, 1775. This packet had been received by Mr. Bache after my departure for France, lay dormant among his papers during all my absence, and has just now broke out upon me *like words*, that had been, as somebody said, "*concealed in northern air.*" Therein I find all the pleasing little family history of your children; how William had begun to spell, overcoming by strength of memory all the difficulty occasioned by the common wretched alphabet; while you were convinced of the utility of our new one. How Tom, genius-like, struck out new paths, and relinquishing the old names of the letters, called *U Bell* and *P Bottle*. How Eliza began to grow jolly, that is fat and handsome, resembling Aunt Rook, whom I used to call *my lovely*: together with all the *then* news of Lady Blunt's having produced at length a boy; of Dolly's being well, and of poor good Catherine's decease. Of your affairs with Muir and Atkinson, and of their contract for feeding the fish in the channel. Of the Vinys, and their jaunt to Cambridge in the long carriage. Of Dolly's journey to Wales with Mr. Scot. Of the Wilkes's, the Pearces, Elphinston, &c. &c. Concluding with a kind of promise, that as soon as the ministry and Congress agreed to make peace, I should have you with me in America. That peace has been some time made, but alas! the promise is not yet fulfilled. And why is it not fulfilled?

I have found my family here in health, good circumstances, and well respected by their fellow citizens. The companions of my youth are indeed almost all departed, but I find an agreeable society among their children and grandchildren. I have public business enough to preserve me from *ennui*, and private amusement besides, in conversation, books, my garden, and *cribbage*. Considering our well-furnished plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plats, and gravel walks, with trees and flowering shrubs. Cards we sometimes play here in long winter evenings; but it is as they play at chess, not for money, but for honour, or the pleasure of beating one another. This will not be quite a novelty to you, as you may remember we played together in

that manner during the winter you helped me to pass so agreeably at Passy. I have indeed now and then a little compunction in reflecting that I spend time so idly ; but another reflection comes to relieve me, whispering, " You know the soul is immortal ; why then should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you have a whole eternity before you ? " So being easily convinced, and, like other reasonable creatures, satisfied with a small reason, when it is in favour of doing what I have a mind to do, I shuffle the cards again and begin another game.

As to public amusements, we have neither plays nor operas, but we had yesterday a kind of oratorio, as you will see by the enclosed paper ; and we have assemblies, balls, and concerts, besides little parties at one another's houses, in which there is sometimes dancing, and frequently good music ; so that we jog on in life as pleasantly as you do in England, any where but in London ; for there you have plays performed by good actors. That however is, I think, the only advantage London has over Philadelphia.

Temple has turned his thoughts to agriculture, which he pursues ardently, being in possession of a fine farm that his father lately conveyed to him. Ben is finishing his studies at college, and continues to behave as well as when you knew him, so that I still think he will make you a good son. His younger brothers and sisters are also all promising, appearing to have good tempers and dispositions, as well as good constitutions. As to myself, I think my general health and spirits rather better than when you saw me, and the particular malady I then complained of continues tolerable. With sincere and very great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

P.S. My children and grandchildren join with me in best wishes for you and yours. My love to my godson, to Eliza, and to honest Tom. They will all find agreeable companions here. Love to Dolly*, and tell her she will do well to come with you.

* Mrs. Dorothy Blunt.

LETTER LXXIV.

Dr. Franklin to M. le Marquis de la Fayette.

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

Dear friend,

I RECEIVED the kind letter you did me the honour of writing in February, 1786. The indolence of old age, and the perpetual teasing of too much business, have made me so bad a correspondent, that I have hardly written a letter to any friend in Europe during the last twelvemonth : but as I have always a pleasure in hearing from them, which I cannot expect will be continued if I do not write to them, I again take up my pen, and begin with those whose correspondence is of the greatest value ; among which I reckon that of the Marquis de la Fayette.

I was glad to hear of your safe return to Paris, after so long and fatiguing a journey. That is the place where your enlightened zeal for the welfare of our country can employ itself most to our advantage, and I know it is always at work, and indefatigable. Our enemies are, as you observe, very industrious in depreciating our national character. Their abuse sometimes provokes me, and I am almost ready to retaliate ; but I have held my hand, though there is abundant room for recrimination ; because I would do nothing that might hasten another quarrel by exasperating those who are still sore from their late disgraces. Perhaps it may be best that they should please themselves with fancying us weak, and poor, and divided, and friendless ; they may then not be jealous of our growing strength (which, since the peace, does really make rapid progress), and may be less intent on interrupting it.

I do not wonder that the Germans, who know little of free constitutions, should be ready to suppose that such cannot support themselves. We think they may, and we hope to prove it. That there should be faults in our first sketches or plans of government is not surprising ; rather, considering the times and the circumstances under which they were formed, it is surprising that the faults are so few. Those in

the general confederating articles are now about to be considered in a convention called for that express purpose; these will indeed be the most difficult to rectify. Those of particular states will undoubtedly be rectified, as their inconveniences shall by experience be made manifest. And whatever difference of sentiment there may be among us respecting particular regulations, the enthusiastic rejoicings with which the day of declared independence is annually celebrated, demonstrate the universal satisfaction of the people with the revolution and its grand principles.

I enclose the vocabulary you sent me, with the words of the Shawanese and Delaware languages, which Colonel Har-mar has procured for me. He is promised one more complete, which I shall send you as soon as it comes to my hands.

My grandson, whom you so kindly inquire after, is at his estate in the Jerseys, and amuses himself with cultivating his lands. I wish he would seriously make a business of it, and renounce all thoughts of public employment; for I think agriculture the most honourable, because the most independent of all professions. But I believe he hankers a little after Paris, or some other of the polished cities of Europe, thinking the society there preferable to what he meets with in the woods of Ancocas; as it certainly is. If he was now here, he would undoubtedly join with me and the rest of my family (who are much flattered by your remembrance of them) in best wishes for your health and prosperity, and that of your whole amiable fireside. You will allow an old friend of fourscore to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds, and children, and prays God to bless them all. Adieu! and believe me ever, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LXXV.

Dr. Franklin to Count de Buffon, Paris.

Philadelphia, Nov. 19, 1787.

Dear sir,

I AM honoured by your letter desiring to know by what means I am relieved

in a disorder, with which you are also unfortunately afflicted. I have tried all the noted prescriptions for *diminishing* the stone, without perceiving any good effect. But observing temperance in eating, avoiding wine and cyder, and using daily the dumb bell, which exercises the upper part of the body without much moving the parts in contact with the stone, I think I have prevented its *increase*. As the roughness of the stone lacerates a little the neck of the bladder, I find, that when the urine happens to be sharp, I have much pain in making water and frequent urgencies. For relief under this circumstance I take, going to bed, the bigness of a pigeon's egg of jelly of blackberries: the receipt for making it is enclosed. While I continue to do this every night I am generally easy the day following, making water pretty freely, and with long intervals. I wish most sincerely that this simple remedy may have the same happy effect with you. Perhaps currant jelly, or the jelly of apples, or of raspberries, may be equally serviceable; for I suspect the virtue of the jelly may lie principally in the boiled sugar, which is in some degree candied by the boiling of the jelly. Wishing you for your own sake much more ease, and for the sake of mankind many more years, I remain with the greatest esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant.

LETTER LXXVI.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Rush.

Philadelphia (without date, but supposed to be in 1789).

My dear friend,

DURING our long acquaintance you have shewn many instances of your regard for me, yet I must now desire you to add one more to the number, which is, that if you publish your ingenious discourse on the *moral sense*, you will totally omit and suppress that most extravagant encomium on your friend Franklin, which hurt me exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and will mortify me beyond conception, if it should appear from the press. Con-

finding in your compliance with this earnest request, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LXXVII.

Dr. Franklin to David Hartley, Esq.

Philadelphia, Dec. 4, 1789.

My very dear friend,

I RECEIVED your favour of August last. Your kind condolences, on the painful state of my health, are very obliging. I am thankful to God, however, that, among the numerous ills human life is subject to, one only of any importance is fallen to my lot; and that so late as almost to insure that it can be but of short duration.

The convulsions in France are attended with some disagreeable circumstances; but if by the struggle she obtains and secures for the nation its future liberty, and a good constitution, a few years' enjoyment of those blessings will amply repair all the damages their acquisition may have occasioned. God grant that not only the love of liberty, but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man, may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his foot anywhere on its surface, and say, This is my country! Your wishes for a cordial and perpetual friendship between Britain and her ancient colonies, are manifested continually in every one of your letters to me; something of my disposition on the same subject may appear to you in casting your eye over the enclosed paper*. I do not by this opportunity send you any of our gazettes; because the postage from Liverpool would be more than they are worth. I can now only add my best wishes of every kind of felicity for the three amiable Hartleys, to whom I have the honour of being an affectionate friend and most obedient humble servant.

* Uncertain what paper.

LETTER LXXVIII.

To *****.

(Without date.)

Dear sir,

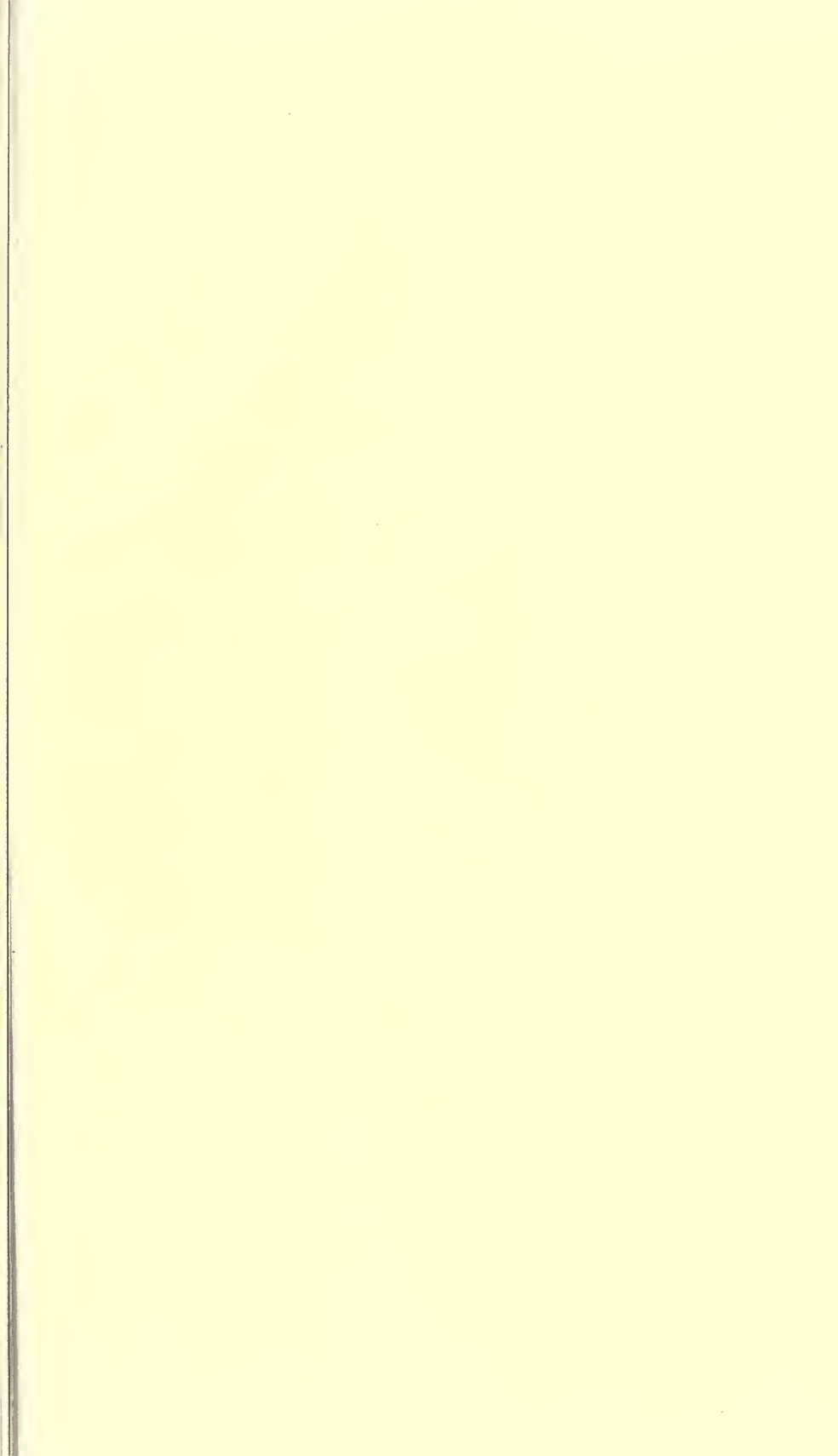
I HAVE read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favour particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject; and the consequence of printing this piece will be, a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of

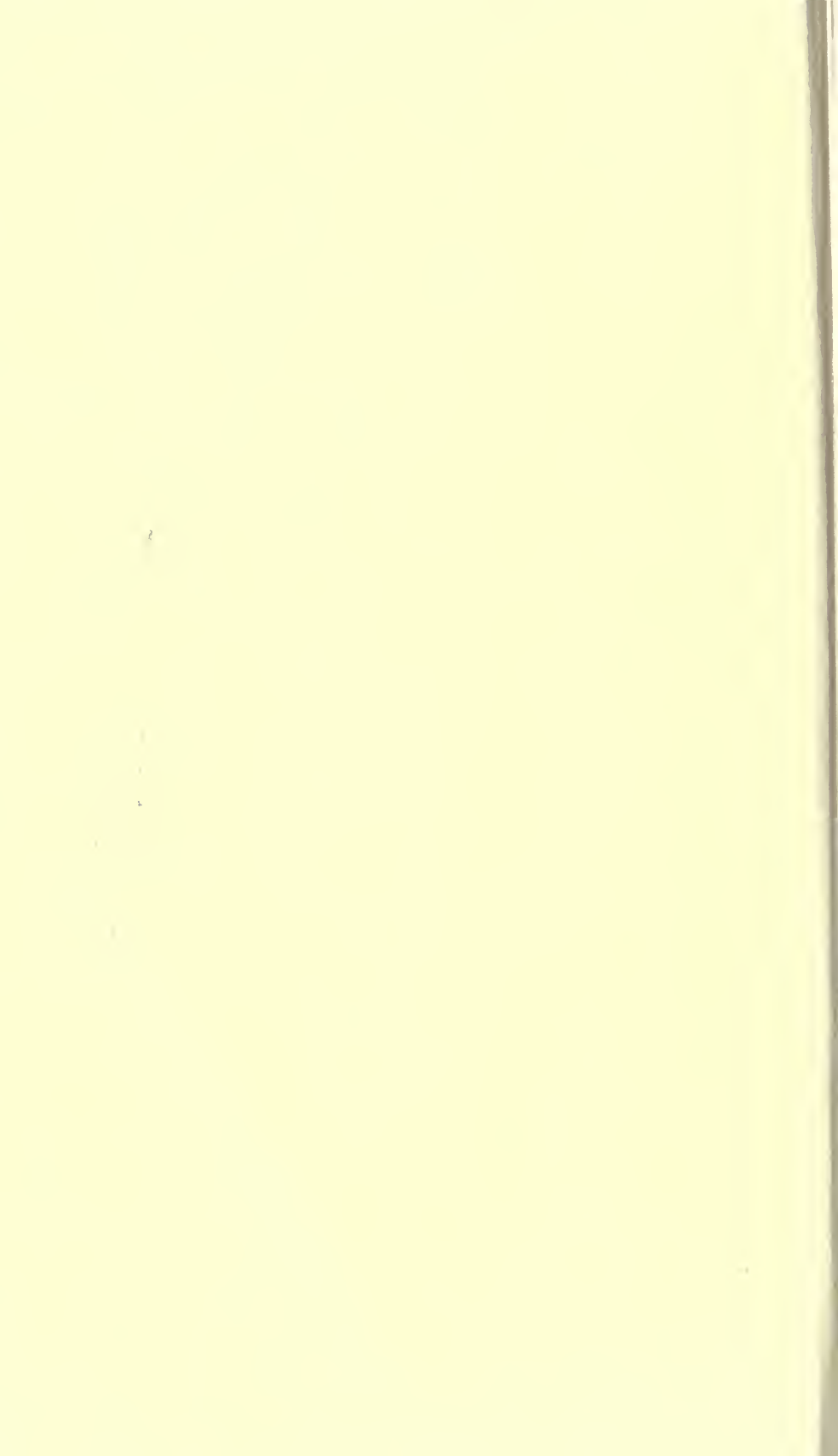
men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you therefore not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men

are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be if *without it**? I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours.

* Montesquieu says, "La religion, même fausse, est le meilleur garant que les hommes puissent avoir de la probité des hommes." (Esprit des Loix, chap. 25, liv. 8)

THE END.





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